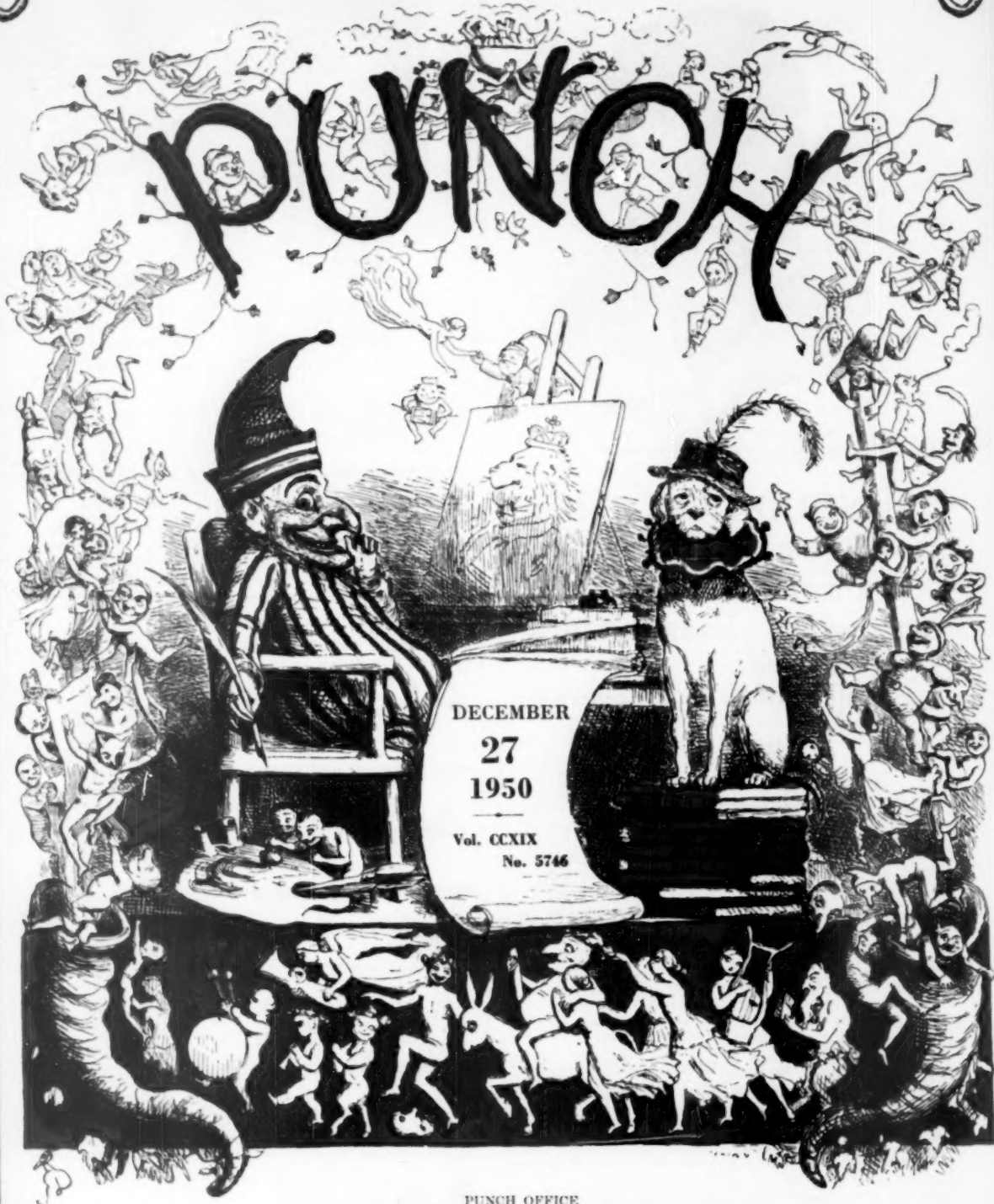


6^p

PUNCH OR TWO LONDON CHARIVARI—WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 27 1950

6^p

PUNCH OFFICE
10 BOUVERIE STREET LONDON E.C.4



"PUNCHBOWLE Tobacco
stood me in good stead
through the most
harrowing Examinations"
says this
South African College-man

Staff Mess
Mines
South Africa

Dear Sirs,

During my three years at College, I enjoyed your PUNCHBOWLE Tobacco, and it stood me in good stead through the most harrowing Examinations.

I now find myself as a junior official on a gold mine, with none of my favourite Tobacco—a very bad state of affairs.

I wonder if you would be good enough to let me know how this situation can be remedied.

Yours faithfully,

We replied that we should be very glad to supply him by personal parcel post direct to the Mine, until such times as we were able to arrange for him a more convenient source of supply.

The original letter can be inspected at The Barneys Sales Bureau, 24 Holborn, E.C.1

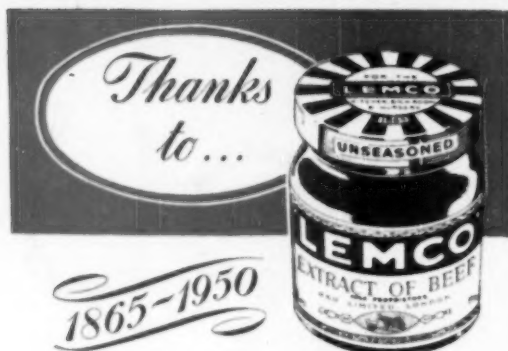
TO YOUNGER SMOKERS, EVERYWHERE!

Two generations of Pipemen have been recommending Barneys to other Smokers because of its sheer goodness. Wisely you may follow their friendly lead. Smokers abroad can arrange for regular personal despatches, Ex-bond and British Duty Free, in 2 lb. parcels, to many lands but not, as yet, to all.

(329)

★ Punchbowl (full), Barneys (medium), and Parsons Pleasure (mild). Home Prices 4.5d. ea.

John Sinclair Ltd., Manufacturers. Newcastle upon Tyne. Eng.



The family will appreciate that little addition of LEMCO BEEF EXTRACT. It makes all the difference to your cooking

LEMCO THE ORIGINAL
Concentrated Beef Extract

AN OXO LIMITED PRODUCT

★ If you have any difficulty in obtaining LEMCO we will send you a sample 2 oz. jar. Please write to Dept. SP3, OXO Ltd., Thames House, London, E.C.4 (giving name and address of your Grocer)

MORE MILES PER GALLON ➡

AC

WITH AIRCRAFT INSULATOR ➡

AC

QUICK, CERTAIN STARTING ➡

AC

A BRITISH PRODUCT ➡

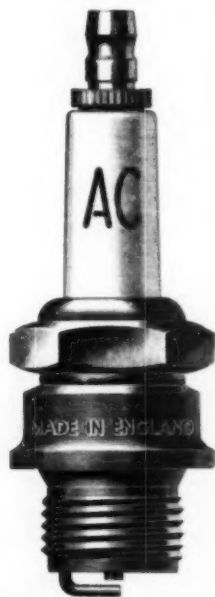
AC

MADE BY GENERAL MOTORS ➡

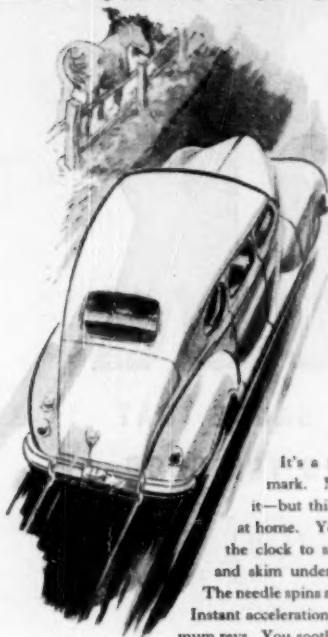
AC-SPARK SPARK PLUG CO. DIVISION OF GENERAL MOTORS LTD. DUNSTABLE ENGLAND

AC

SPARK PLUGS



above the 60 mark



It's a rare world above the 60 mark. Most drivers hardly know it—but this car can live there—she's at home. You spin the needle round the clock to sixty and the hills swoop and skim under the supple suspension. The needle spins again—60-70-75—silently! Instant acceleration all the way up to maximum revs. You soothe her down with a touch of the powerful hydraulic brakes. This used to be a long drawn out road but already the limit sign says 30—seems like crawling.

That's what she's famous for—performance plus comfort, proving her supremacy in international high speed duels. But—this is not a cockpit you're in—there's room for two more on that broad, soft seat alongside you. Room for two more behind—three if necessary. A supremely comfortable family saloon.

As you sort out the traffic ahead, the clumps if cars coming and going . . . coming and going . . . the torsion bar suspension turning the bumps into cushions and holding you gently steady at the corners, you wonder how she can be so fast—so comfortable. That's this car's secret. Be content to let her keep it.

This car is a waste of money if you don't care what a car does. There's such a lot built into it that doesn't really show until you have it in your hands. Once tried, you'll say 'I'd rather go by Javelin!'

Top speed, electrically timed, 78 m.p.h. Acceleration 0-60 m.p.h. in 22.2 secs.—('The Motor' Road Test). Horizontally opposed flat - four, 50 B.H.P. engine.

Javelin saloon: £595 plus purchase tax £166.0.7.

Javelin saloon de luxe: £695 plus purchase tax £193.16.1.

*There are over 200 fully qualified Service Agents in Great Britain.



1½ LITRE

JAVELIN

take a good look when it passes you

Jowett Cars Limited, Bradford. 48 Albemarle Street, Piccadilly, W.1.



The hunt is worth while—

if the kill is a

"GLOSDURA" Shirt

GLOUCESTER SHIRT CO. LTD. GLOUCESTER ENG



The occasion .



. and the shoe

For the informal town occasion these 'Spire' London Brogues are ideal. Combining good looks and a good fit they are available in black or tan.

Spire

G. T. White Shoe Co. Ltd. Leicester

Write for name of local Agent who will be pleased to show you other styles from the extensive Spire range.



Skipper Joe Brownfield

Shippam's buy the best
of the pilchard catch...



Skipper Joe Brownfield of the Newlyn Pilchard Fleet knows that only the finest fish are good enough for Shippam's. Millions of housewives endorse his opinion... Shippam's delicious Pilchard & Tomato Paste—made only with fresh pilchards and finest tomatoes—is first favourite with families everywhere.

Shippam's
PILCHARD & TOMATO PASTE



SHIPPAM'S have been pleasing the public with fine foods for 200 years. We are proud of this tradition and proud, too, that the public still hold our products in such high esteem.

C. SHIPPAM LTD · CHICHESTER · 1750-1950

Get some today—
your grocer has plenty



BY APPOINTMENT TO
HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN
THE ROYAL ARMY MEDICAL DEPT.
PREPARED BY SHIPPAM & CO. LTD.

O.K.

THE SAUCE THAT
DOES YOU GOOD



*For a limited
period your
grocer has
supplies of*
**Maconochie's
Cream of
Asparagus Soup**



Maconochie's Superb Soups

**"SANATOGEN"
TONIC WINE**



"SWINGS
YOU BACK
TO HEALTH"

"SANATOGEN" Tonic Wine is an admirable restorative for it combines the "pick-me-up" qualities of a rich, full-bodied wine with the active tonic properties of "SANATOGEN" Nerve Tonic.

The word "SANATOGEN" is a registered Trade Mark.

8/-
PER BOTT.
4/6
HALF BOTT.



from
'Ballade'

**HORNIMANS
DISTINCTIVE**

TEA

W. H. & F. J. HORNIMAN & CO., LTD. EST. 1826



By Appointment
To His Majesty the King



**Cerebos
SALT**

CEREBOS IODISED SALT—ALSO AVAILABLE

**The loveliest casserole
is as cheap as any
you can buy!**



17½-pint size 'Pyrex' brand
oval casserole, 6/-

**—AND IT GIVES PERFECT
RESULTS IN COOKING DISHES
LIKE DELICIOUS SAVOURY
STEWES OR HOT-POTS**



**CHOOSE YOUR
'PYREX' BRAND
OVENWARE HERE**



1-pint size round covered
casserole, 3/6d.



7½-inch pie-plate, 2/6d.



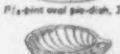
1-pint pie-dish, 3/-



1-pint pudding dish, 1/9d



1½-pint oval pie-dish, 2/-



Scalloped shells, 9d. each

IT'S hard to believe that these beautifully designed, sparkling glass 'Pyrex' brand casseroles are also as cheap as any you can buy. But it's true! In fact, they actually cost less than many types of casserole, and they last and last, even when in constant use.

And there's something special, too, about the cooking qualities of this lovely oven-table glassware. It cooks through and through, right to the centre—but gently and evenly. That's because glass holds heat and distributes it evenly to the food inside. The food never gets sizzled up—holds all its rich, natural flavour.

Cooking in 'Pyrex' brand ovenware is economical in fuel—you need less gas. Get one of these lovely, inexpensive casseroles and see what delicious, economical dishes you can produce for the family!

**BEST FOR COOKING, CHEAPEST AND
LOVELIEST OVEN-TABLE WARE**



EMERALD
TODAY
PYREX

'PYREX'

MADE IN
ENGLAND

OVEN-TABLE GLASSWARE

All 'Pyrex' brand ovenware carries a 12 months' free replacement guarantee against breakage by oven-hat. It is made by James A. Jobling & Co. Ltd., Wear Glass Works, Sunderland.

What beautiful Downshire carpeting



And only 10/6 a yard (18" wide)

**SEND
NOW
FOR
SAMPLES**

All-over carpets are no longer an unattainable luxury—you can make up your own from Downshire rubber-backed carpeting. Requires no underfelt . . . easily cut for fitting . . . lies flat and needs no sewing or binding. Wears well and gives a soft tread. Available in three widths.

IN NINE LOVELY COLOURS

Carriage paid. Send 1/- for complete range of samples and full details.	10 6d. per yard	(18" wide)
	19/-	(36" wide)
	28 6d.	(54" wide)

PETER SHEPHERD & COMPANY

Dept. 33B, Kennet Side Works, Reading, Berks.

Why 'Clydella' shirts are best for all schoolboys



'Clydella'

IF IT SHRINKS WE REPLACE



SCHOOL SHIRTS AND PYJAMAS

Made by the makers of—

VIVELLA and 'DAYELLA'

'CLYDELLA' shirts are best for all schoolboys. Why? Because there are special fittings for tall and short boys and generous tucks and hems to allow for growth. Moreover, 'Clydella' shirts are exceptionally hard-wearing and stand up to repeated washing. Their wearability and washability are indeed unique. The famous pledge IF IT SHRINKS WE REPLACE is your guarantee. The collars are replaceable after long wear, in a larger size, to allow for growth.

'Clydella' shirts and pyjamas are listed by the majority of leading preparatory and . . . as Schools as official garments. Supplies, unfortunately, are still rather limited.

D. 624



The cooker every woman wants

Available at your local Gas Showrooms

AHEAD OF ALL



Since the 1920s
GOOD HOUSEKEEPING
INSTITUTE
Guarantee
Approved in regard to safety
of this much liked to modern
in their construction

For Superior Quality visit us
W. H. PAUL LTD., Breaston
DORSET





Sir Nicholas Twyford

SIR NICHOLAS TWYFORD was the English craftsman invited to make magnificent presentation plate in gold and silver for the victorious Black Prince, and to execute many other noble commissions.



For a hundred years Goddard's has been used to clean and protect both show pieces and simple silver in the home.

Goddard's Silver Polishes

Plate Powder • Silver Polish • Silver Cloths • Silver Wool



SILVER

Antique Silver
Old Sheffield Plate
Gold & Gem-set Jewellery
We Buy and Sell.

MEMBER OF THE BRITISH ANTIQUE DEALERS ASSOCIATION

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This shop is situated behind Venners



The subtle colouring and graceful design of a Royal Venton Fireplace will complement the most tasteful furnishing scheme and bring added charm and distinction to your home.

Available at all good Builders Merchants, Hardware Dealers and Distributors throughout the country. Please write for the name and address of your nearest stockist.



Royal Venton
FIREPLACES

JOHN STEVENTON & SONS LTD • BURSLEM • STOKE-ON-TRENT • STAFFS

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The Vacuum Way ON THE HIGHWAYS

He keeps things moving . . .

He knows the lubrication needs of every vehicle attached to this depot and how to obtain the best performance from each one. He knows that prevention is better than cure, and how to forestall trouble with regular inspections and the right lubricant in the right place at the right time. He is the Vacuum Engineer, and this is one of hundreds of great garages that keep their transport on the move the Vacuum way.

Vacuum is far more than a supplier of Sovac, Delvac and other top-class lubricants: it is a *complete* lubrication service, with specially trained engineers whose experience and advice are always at the disposal of regular maintenance staffs.

This is only one aspect of the Vacuum Lubrication Service. With its powerful help, the wheels of industry turn smoothly in factories all over the country. There is a Vacuum specialist in marine lubrication at every major port in the world. On the farm, tractors, cultivators and all kinds of farm machinery respond the better for Vacuum care and supervision. Other branches of this same Vacuum Service help to keep railway engines on the job, and ensure that private cars and motor cycles are never far from supplies of Mobiloil and the other Vacuum lubricants they need.

A complete lubrication service for everything mechanical —

**THAT'S THE
VACUUM WAY**



VACUUM OIL COMPANY LIMITED, LONDON, S.W.1

First in design

Complete interchangeability of type-unit, carriage and platen plus many new features.

performance

Distinctive work of unequalled legibility. Clear carbon copies and fine stencils.

value

Built to give the long service always associated with Imperial Typewriters.



Imperial MODEL 60

Made throughout in Leicester by the Imperial Typewriter Co. Ltd.
There is an Imperial agent in every large town.

Why K for winter?

BECAUSE I'M WATER-TIGHT
TWICE OVER!

I'm K Veldtschoen, made on the shoe-within-a-shoe principle which guarantees that you go dry shod in all weathers. What's more, my water-tight qualities are unimpaired by numerous re-solings. Yours in Brown Zug for 85/.



K

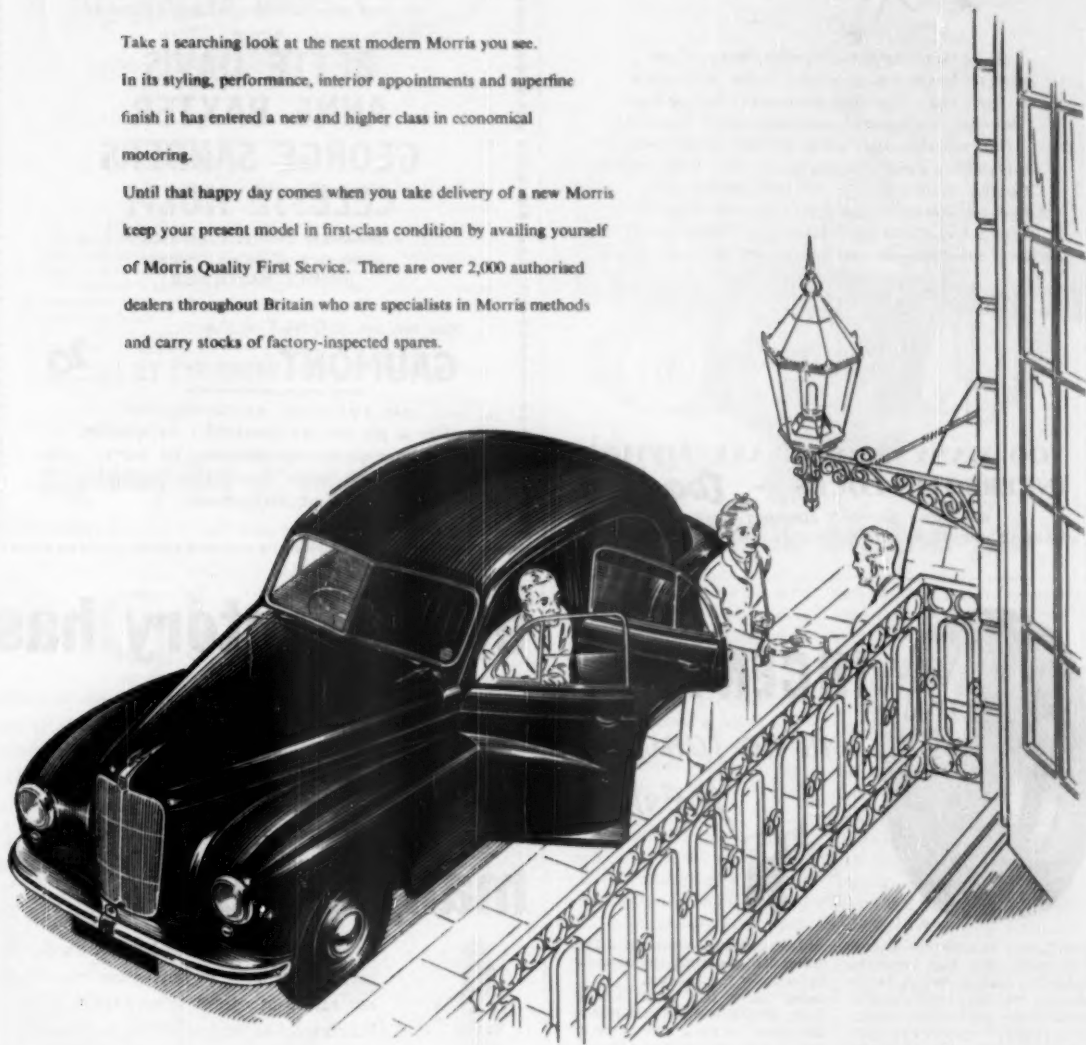
VELDTSCHOEN for a man

In a class of its own for "Quality First" Features

Take a searching look at the next modern Morris you see.

In its styling, performance, interior appointments and superfine finish it has entered a new and higher class in economical motoring.

Until that happy day comes when you take delivery of a new Morris keep your present model in first-class condition by availing yourself of Morris Quality First Service. There are over 2,000 authorised dealers throughout Britain who are specialists in Morris methods and carry stocks of factory-inspected spares.



The "Quality First" **MORRIS**

Morris Minor Saloon £209 (plus £25. 10. 1 Purchase Tax) • Morris Oxford Saloon £427 (plus £119. 7. 3 Purchase Tax)

Morris Six Saloon £525 (plus £146. 11. 0 Purchase Tax)



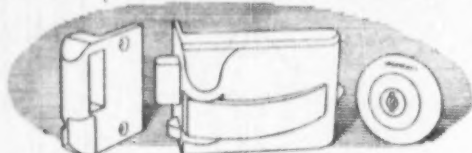
MORRIS MOTORS LIMITED, COWLEY, OXFORD. OVERSEAS BUSINESS: HUFFIELD EXPORTS LIMITED, OXFORD AND 41 PICCADILLY, LONDON, W.1.
C95C



**Don't give
the burglar a
present, too!**

During the present festivities, while you are off your guard, the burglar is on the watch! Is your house safe in your absence—or might you return to find your house ransacked, your treasured possessions stolen or destroyed?

Don't take risks—take action. Fit Ingersoll High Security Locks and have a good time with an easy mind. Every Insurance Company recommends them—the Police approve them—but burglars shun them! You should know more about the Ingersoll Lock and its unique Master-Key System—consult your Locksmith or write now for your free copy of "Maximum Security."



**TOO MANY PEOPLE ARE FITTING
INGERSOLL LOCKS - *too late***

INGERSOLL SECURITY ADVISORY BUREAU

A. INGERSOLL CORNER, RUISLIP, MIDDLESEX. *Phone: BYRON 3456 (10 lines).



**INCENTIVE
is no fancy
finish**



THE beauty of a Henley Tyre is more than skin deep. From raw material to final moulding, Incentive—the stimulus to better work—makes every tyre-building operation at Henley's sounder and surer. It takes workmanship of exceptional skill to make tyres that give more miles of hard wear. Machines play their part—and Henley's have the most modern plant in Britain. Materials must be first-class. But it is the human element that makes or mars a tyre. The Henley Incentive Scheme encourages extra care

and thoroughness in every job. The better a man's work, the more he earns under this Scheme.

MORE MILES FOR YOUR MONEY
Long trouble-free life in a tyre is something to value now as never before. And you can choose Henley Tyres with the confidence of getting those extra miles, thanks to the principle of 'better pay for better work'. You pay nothing extra for an incentive-built tyre—but you get more of what you want for your money. Check your tyre-mileage and see.

YOUR DEALER WILL BE PLEASED TO FIT

HENLEY TYRES
BUILT WITH INCENTIVE

Darryl F. Zanuck presents
"all about eve"

A film that makes "Let's go to the Pictures" the best entertainment value in London!

starring

**BETTE DAVIS
ANNE BAXTER
GEORGE SANDERS
CELESTE HOLM**

Produced by DARRYL F. ZANUCK
written for the screen and Directed by
JOSEPH L. MANKIEWICZ

You can see it **ONLY** at the

GAUMONT HAYMARKET 12.30, 3.5, 5.40, 8.15 **20**

AN IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

For a picture so unusual - in quality, in entertainment stature, in scope - it must be seen from the beginning for your fullest enjoyment.

every factory has

The *Harris range is wide enough to enable you to select *exactly* the right brush for any job—cleaning, dusting or oiling. The bristles won't come out unless they're torn out. The brushes last longer. Quality is standardised and guaranteed in each type. So, no duds in

many uses

your repeat orders. And last there's the big saving to be made by buying *one* brand from *one* source at agreed terms. Ask your local Harris stockist for details or write direct to us. L. G. Harris & Co. Ltd., Stoke Prior, Worcs.

for paint brushes

and there's a *Harris*

brush for every one



*There are 5 grades of brushes in the Harris range
CNC 91

Mr. Accountant

It's EASIER than A.B.C.

The purpose of a ledger system is to tell you

- A Who owes you money
- B How long they have owed it
- C What steps have been taken to get the money in

Vertical Visible does all this for you — at a glance. Cuts out 75% of the searching necessitated by any other ledger system. All the essential information is there in one place, right up to date — ledger card and statement, too. (Static information on the title insert. Credit status seen in a flash.)

Vertical Visible is the perfect complement to the accounting machine, although its many advantages apply equally to hand-posted records.

There's a home for every account — with the name right on the gate — *instantly visible* — you go straight to the one you want. No fumbling — no rummaging. No drudgery — more time for accurate work.

Too good to be true? Please allow us to send you a copy of our new Vertical Visible Booklet. A post-card or 'phone call will bring it to you by the first post.

Remington Rand

REMINGTON RAND LTD. (Dept. V. V. 58), 1 New Oxford St., London, W.C.1. Tel. Cha 9888

Glavya

SCOTCH LIQUEUR



Warm and genial,
friendly and kind, a
drink to linger over
... on all occasions
of hospitality.



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When Bellman's Build in Steel



there's

EXPERIENCE on the job

★ STEEL BUILDINGS are Bellman's business, whether the job is one of planning and erecting, repairing or adapting. Their knowledge is unsurpassed, their engineers prepared for every problem that site, climate or client may pose. Moreover, their wide experience helps to cut the cost of first class work.

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★ BELLMAN'S are pioneers of the "Unit Construction" building. The BELLMAN HANGAR—famous in every theatre of the late war—is but one example of Bellman's mastery of the technique of large-span building by the unit method. To-day, they supply and erect temporary or permanent hangars, workshops, stores and large-span buildings of all kinds, whatever the climate and however difficult the site.

Write or ring BELLMAN'S for consultation on any steel construction problem.

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A GRAND 'LONG'
WITH ICED WATER



THE BASIS OF A
PERFECT 'SHORT'



That's the long and short of it!



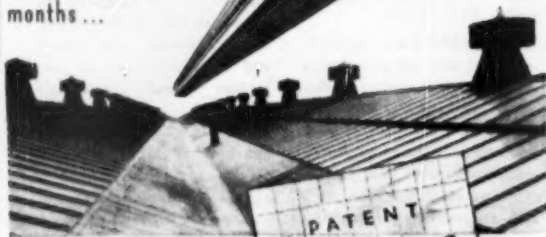
PERNOD

The Spirit of France

Sole Importers

Available in Bottles and Half Bottles from Leading Wine Merchants
Sole Importers: J. B. FARMINGHAM & Co. Ltd., Nine Elms St., W.1

Over
2,500,000 super feet
of the World's finest
glazing
has been used during
the past **TWELVE**
months...



producing
roofs of
immaculate
efficiency by

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Use our experience... we will
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representative to discuss your
problems and submit estimates.

W. H. HEYWOOD & CO. LTD., HUDDERSFIELD.
Telephones: Huddersfield 4594 (4 lines). And at:
LONDON, MANCHESTER, NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE,
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BRISTOL, NOTTINGHAM, GLASGOW, EDINBURGH
and BELFAST n.d.b.

MEDWAY

—home of **MULTI-WALLS**



It is in the heart of Kent that the modern multi-wall sack
has been developed in this country, largely pioneered by
Medway, a Division of the Reed Paper Group which is
one of the biggest paper-making organisations in the world.
Indeed with their unrivalled technical resources and experi-
ence, Reed's are the largest producers in the whole of
Europe of the tough Kraft paper from which Medway
multi-wall sacks are made.



MEDWAY PAPER SACKS

Division of the **REED** Paper Group

MEDWAY PAPER SACKS LTD., LARKFIELD, NR. MAIDSTONE, KENT

HURWORTH

Newmarket,
Suffolk

COPE'S STABLE INFORMATION

No. 10 of a series describing famous racing establishments



NIMBUS — 2,000
Guineas and Derby
winner of 1947



HELLSPONT — a
regular winner from
the stable for four
seasons

While not so well known as some of the larger
establishments, Hurworth House has a long
association with famous trainers. James Waugh
and Tom Waugh used these stables in their day.
It was Tom Waugh who sent out Cinna to win the
One Thousand Guineas in 1920.

George Colling took over in 1930, and has been
among the leading trainers each year since the war.
Nimbus, Las Vegas, Bico and Hellespont are the
best of many winners Colling has saddled from
Hurworth House.

Another "stable certainty" is Cope's Confidential
Credit Service—the "sure thing" for off-the-course
backers since 1895. When you're a client of Cope's,
you're "on" to courtesy, personal attention and real
NO-LIMIT terms. You enjoy every facility of modern
Turf accountancy and your bets—large and small—
are backed by the spotless reputation of the House of
Cope. Send **TODAY** for
your free copy of Cope's
fascinating new brochure.

You can depend on
COPE'S

DAVID COPE & LUDGATE CIRCUS
LONDON E.C.4
The World's Best Known Turf Accountants



With our usual thirst



for knowledge and other things
we have been looking

into the subject of beer you should know
that the strength of beer is controlled by Parliament
which may explain why most of it is too weak

It come up from the cellar unaided and has to have help
to force it along the pipes to the bar now if Accles & Pollock
have a weakness it's for giving help through
tubes and the pipes they provide ensure that the beer
arrives full of vim and vigour and
being of stainless steel
they make sure that the party is clean
from start to finish



"Have you a trumpet handy?" is the title
of a book published by Accles & Pollock
which will be sent to anybody who is
seriously anxious to have help through tubes.



What is POISE?



POISE is perfect balance... an equanimity of body and mind... complete composure whatever the social scene. Such superb self-confidence is created by elegant dress, immaculate grooming and a faultless complexion.

An Embassy complexion... exquisitely smooth, clear and fresh... has this perfection.

Your precious complexion surely deserves the *greater* care of truly mild Embassy Soap, made by Pears for women of poise! 8½d.



FT 35/56/50



*On the go
all day*

Children call on their energy all the time. Virol builds reserves of energy. It's the food for healthy growth and development. Give Virol after every meal.

Virol

VIROL is a concentrated food containing malt extract, specially refined beef fat, egg, sugars (including glucose) and orange juice, with added mineral salts and vitamins.

World events and your natural bristle toothbrush

PRACTICALLY all the best natural bristle for making toothbrushes comes from Siberia and China—both of which are behind the Iron Curtain. Some bristle is also imported from Calcutta, but the quality of this is poor. Though very stiff when new, Calcutta bristle quickly gets soggy and breaks down.

As a result of this situation, natural bristle of good quality is now obtainable only at very high prices, and toothbrush manufacturers must choose between lowering their standards of quality and increasing prices.

Ever since William Addis made the first toothbrush in 1780 we have been very jealous

of the high reputation of our bristle toothbrushes, and it is our proud boast that nothing but first-grade Siberian and Chungking bristle has ever gone into a Wisdom bristle brush. Rather than adulterate the quality of the Wisdom bristle toothbrush by mixing in inferior bristle, we would withdraw it from sale. Fortunately this drastic step is not yet necessary—and we hope it never will be—but we are forced to increase our price to 2/9d. Wisdom Extra in British-made nylon, of course, still remains the same price—1/11d. (cheaper, incidentally, than a brush of equal quality pre-war—despite the addition of 33½% purchase tax).

Wisdom BRISTLE The de luxe natural bristle brush

MADE BY ADDIS LTD. OF HERTFORD



ADORN YOUR FLOWERS WITH LIGHT

Until you have seen the effect of R.E.A.L. Plinth Lighting you have never seen flowers at their loveliest. The diffused upward light which reflects through the vase and its floral contents enhances the fragile beauty of each petal and lends transparency to every leaf.

Plinth Lighting is beautiful everywhere, it is perfect in dim corners and provides economical and charming pilot lighting in halls, passages, also for Television viewing.

The Plinth, imbued with modern dignity in design and beautifully finished in coloured pastel enamels is mounted on three rubber feet for furniture protection, equipped with heavy top glass, shock proof porcelain lamp-holder and three yards of flexible cord.

Obtainable from high class Electrical Stores everywhere

The **R.E.A.L.**

30/-
TAX PAID

Send for Free coloured illustrated brochure

PLINTH LIGHT

ROWLANDS ELECTRICAL ACCESSORIES LTD REAL WORKS SHAM.18



PUNCH

OR
The London Charivari



CHARIVARIA

Fossil remains of prehistoric ape-men have been found in South Africa. The South African government is now busy deciding how to fit them into the *Apartheid* system.



"The main idea is to show, in this Crazy Corner, things that will stand up to the foreigner's idea of the 'Mad English,'" he said yesterday.

"We want what I'd call fertile madnesses, for example, if someone told me of a hitherto unknown solution of perpetual motion, it would appeal."—Mr. Lavinie Lee, quoted in the "Sunday Dispatch"

The known solutions will be in the Dome of Discovery.

The Waste Paper Recovery Association, which is organizing a £20,000 contest to encourage the collection of waste paper by local authorities, estimates that one million tons will be required during 1951. It does not seem to be realized that the only certain way to get more waste paper is to increase the size of newspapers.

D D

Special trains with polling stations aboard are being run on December 27, when several Soviet republics elect new deputies, and each train will be fully protected by armed electoral commissars. Their job, of course, is to ensure that nobody attempts to go off the rails.

Popular Class-room Trick

"In the suite she had left, her husband, ———, £30-a-week ——— schoolteacher, sat on his head in his hands."—Daily paper



Russia will have over one thousand helicopters in service by 1952, we read. As if we hadn't enough hanging over our heads already.

National Health opticians are complaining that their margins of profit are too low. All the same, for them prosperity is just around the cornea.

631

Desperation

"APARTMENTS WANTED
Cabin Trunk, good cond.,
reasonable. Tel.: 21315."
Advt. in Lancashire paper

"Ace," the new electrical "brain," is said to be capable of solving the most intricate problem in a matter of seconds. Butchers consider that a fair test would be to feed the latest M.o.F. Sausage Order through it.

"BELLRINGERS' RECORD
13-HOUR FEEL."

"Northern Echo"

Found it in the pudding?

Certificate "X"—a new film classification to be introduced in the New Year—will exclude children under sixteen from seeing "films which are wholly adult in theme or treatment." Many film critics pretend to be surprised by the implication that there are any such films.



RAGNARÖK

"At the last day Surtur the All-Kindling shall lead Muspel's sable sons in squadron through the gulf."—*Norse mythology*

SAID Odin: "The end of the world draws near:

We march to-morrow morning—
No, carry on smoking, drink your beer:

I trust we are all good messmates here—

So I want you to get your orders clear

For Ragnarök in the morning.

"It will likely start about six o'clock,

When the first grey light is showing:

The earth will reel to a mighty shock

And you'll hear the Asir's gold-bright cock

High in the sky of Ragnarök

Clapping his wings and crowing.

"While yet the East is flushed with dawn,"

Crowned Odin, almost singing,
"Beneath Yggdrasil's sacred thorn
Heimdall, of whom all gods were born,

Will heave aloft the Giallar-Horn
And set Valhalla ringing.

"Fenris the Wolf will break his chain
And seek out those who bound him;

The Dead Men's Ship will sail again;
And out on Vigrid's empty plain

Loki, the son of Night and Pain,
Will gather his spawn around him.

"By virtue of my magic art,"
Said Odin, deeply drinking,

"I know the end before we start:
I know the Wolf will eat my heart;
Yet each must play a Viking's part
Although the ship be sinking.

"So grimly must you hew and hack,
Shoulder to shoulder fighting
Till Surtur's squadrons, mailed in black,
Pressing regardless through the flak,

Write Finis, and the final Crack
Of Doom dissolves the writing."

* * * * *

Thus Odin prophesied last night;
And now it's nearly morning.
To-day must bring that final fight—
Unless the news we hear is right,
That certain Shepherds have seen a Light

And this is Christmas Morning.
G. D. R. DAVIES

• •

IT HAPPENS TO THE STOVE

MRS. MATTHEWS came sadly into my room carrying a breakfast tray.

"I'm frightfully sorry about the hot water," she said. "It's happened to the stove again."

I beamed at her as sympathetically as possible. I was bleeding in several places after a cold-water shave.

"It happens about every three months," Mrs. Matthews continued. "It just happens—and there it is. No hot water." She made a negative gesture with the toast rack.

"I see what you mean," I said.

"Perhaps you'd like to come and look at it!" she suggested. "After breakfast of course."

"I'd love to," I said. Mrs. Matthews has an idea that I am in some way "mechanical."

So after breakfast I strolled out to the kitchen and we held a meeting round the dead stove.

"You see," said Mrs. Matthews, "you should poke it here and here"—she poked—"and this opens, and then you push it *here*"—she pushed—"and there you are. But it doesn't."

"No," I said.

"And Bill had to go too early this morning to do anything," said Mrs. Matthews, "so there we are."

"Yes," I said.

"Do you think?" she asked.

"I might," I said.

On my knees I investigated one or two of the flaps of the stove. It is one of those stoves that burn anthracite, and it seemed to me that if I just—got—my—fingers—round the edge here and loosened this piece of cinder—

And then it seemed to me that if I could prize up that piece there and move the whatsit I—might—just—be—able—to get my fingers back again.

And then I retreated to take fresh stock of the position.

"It's happened all right," I said. "Why won't it open?"

"Well, if we knew *that* . . ." said Mrs. Matthews.

"I know, I know," I said. "But why wouldn't it open before?"

"Quite frankly," said Mrs. Matthews, in a whisper, "every time before the milkman's done it."

"Ah," I said. "What time does the milkman come?"

"Not till eleven."

An hour and a half I had, to beat the milkman.

Ninety minutes later I was stripped to the waist and anthracite to the elbows. Mrs. Matthews was standing watching me. She had been watching me, in the intervals of dusting and washing-up, all the time. Every so often she would say "Why don't you leave it?" and I would say, fiercely, "I'll just try this," and, then, later on, she would say "No!" and I would say "Can't understand it." A brisk enough conversation, in its way. I had tried the poker three times, a pair of pliers and a hammer twice, and a long piece of wire for half an hour.

"Milk!" came the fatal voice.

"Oh!" said Mrs. Matthews. "The milkman." She flew to the window. "It's happened again," she said.

The milkman made sympathetic clucking noises.

"I'll come in," he said. Mrs. Matthews dragged a stool under the window and the milkman climbed through. The back door is rather inaccessible.

"I've been trying . . ." I said.



TEN YEARS AGO

"Yes, they caught us napping that time."

"Ah," said the milkman. He gave the stove a professional glance. "Let's see."

"Somebody's been hitting it," he said, after a quick inspection.

"Still, looks like there's nothing for it," said the milkman. "Where's the poker?"

I gave it to him.

"Stand back," said the milkman. He lay down on the floor, and stretched his hand, holding the poker, through the lower grating and up into the chimney. There was a click.

"Something's happened," said Mrs. Matthews, excitedly.

"It has, indeed," said the milkman.

"No," I said.

"Yes," said the milkman. "I'm caught."

During the next hour, while I gradually dismantled the stove, the milkman kept telling me how last time nobody had been mucking about with it before he came and everything had been all right. He also told me that he had his round to do. When the pieces of stove almost covered the floor I managed to release the milkman's arm.

"Next time it happens," said the milkman, as he climbed back out of the window, "you can ask somebody else. See! Somebody else."

"There," said Mrs. Matthews, when he had gone.

"Well, he didn't do much," I said. "Did he?"

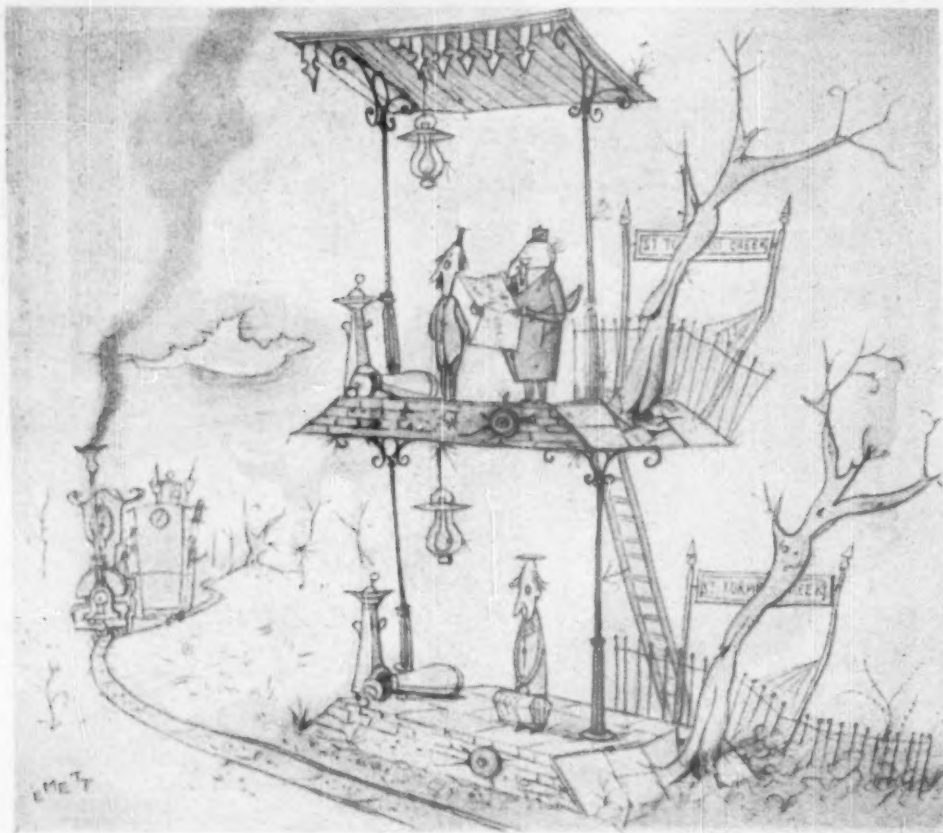
"You'd better put it back again."

"Of course," I said. "And I'll clean it as I put it back, and then everything will be all right."

"For another three months," said Mrs. Matthews.

"For good," I said.

The bitterness of all this should have worn off by now—it happened a week ago. But I can't help feeling irritable to-day. For one thing, I'm bleeding in several places from a cold-water shave, and for another, the milkman won't be coming till to-morrow.



"Well, what d'you think of that? 'No more double-decker trains to be built . . .'"

PRICE ONE PENNY

"WHAT train you meeting?"
said the ticket-collector.
"The two-thirty from Glasgow,"
I said.

"Then you'll have time for a nice cup of tea in the refreshments. Glasgow train's an hour and twenty minutes late. Held up at Lancaster. Fog."

I made a sound midway between "Bah!" and "Pooh!"

"Oh, I don't know," he said, "it's not so bad. Nice clean station, good coal fires in the refreshments and the waiting-room. You've got an hour and twenty minutes of warmth and comfort on your own property, and all for a penny."

I laughed.

"Yes," he said, "a penny. I reckon they're just about the only things that haven't gone up, platform tickets and morning papers."

"And one or two weeklies," I said.

"Mind you . . . mind you . . ." he said, snipping at a day return for Chester, "papers *have* gone up really. We pay the same and get less. I can never find anything to read in mine—it's all Canasta and flying saucers. But it's different with platform tickets: you pay the same and get more."

"How d'you make that out?" I said.

While he considered his reply he flicked a few crumbs of paste-board from his knees.

"Well," he said, "you wait longer these days, don't you? Late trains mean more time to wait at the station, more warmth and comfort in the refreshments and waiting-room. I reckon platform tickets have gone *down* in price really."

"There's a flaw in that argument," I said. "A platform ticket entitles a person to remain in the station for an indefinite period, and always has done. What's to stop me spending a whole day here?"

"Nothing I know of," he said.

"No, and there was nothing to stop me before the war."

"That's right."

"So you can't claim that it's all due to nationalization."

"Who's mentioned national-



"I'll give you a hand. Get me some matches—"

ization?" he said. "I'm only saying that platform tickets are dirt cheap at a penny each, as good a buy as you'll get anywhere to-day for the money."

"Are you inviting me to invest in them?" I said.

"Well, I've known people buy a few dozens at a time when there's been a rumour they were going up."

"Hoarding."

"Oh, I don't *approve*. But then I shouldn't blame anybody who wanted to cook a meal over the waiting-room fire during a power cut. And it would have to be first come first served, if you follow me."

Just then a train drew in and the passengers began to converge upon the ticket-collector's box.

"I'll run along and sample some of the delights of your station," I said. "I must get my money's worth, you know."

"Definitely," he said. "Try the refreshments. It's nice and warm in there and the beer's not too bad."

I was on my way to the book-stall when he shouted. He was leaning out of his box, with one hand cupped at his mouth and the other, with clippers, raised as a barrier to the crowd.

"Eh," he barked, "don't forget to have a go on the weighing-machine. That hasn't gone up either. Only a penny."

Then he levered himself back into the box and started snipping.

BERNARD HOLLOWOOD



"Latest from Marathon—Persians all out."

CONVERSATIONS IN UPPER THAMES STREET

SURVEYING A QUANTITY

"WHEN I was a quantity surveyor once," Thorn was saying when Irma interrupted him.

"But what is a quantity surveyor?" she asked. We all waited to see how he would receive this question. At first he frowned, and then he answered carefully and slowly.

"I never actually knew," he admitted, "although I was highly esteemed in the profession. From my first day I was careful always to be looking at things. I would sit and look at a pile of breeze blocks for hours at a time, and the heads of the firm would tip-toe past, saying under their breath to one another 'What a surveyor young Thorn is, to be sure: so thorough.' I used to stand in front of stacks of asbestos sheeting with a knowing air and my head a little on one side, and say loud enough for everyone to hear me 'My, what a lot!' Sometimes when they were unloading air-bricks I would hold up one hand and say in dogmatic tones 'That is a very suitable quantity.' Then I'd walk away and write things in a little book as I went. After the first week I had several of the men calling me sir, and I made them get out a sixty-foot run of three-quarter gas barrel so that I could have a good look at it. 'Malleability essentially mutable,' I would mutter, giving it an authoritative kick. I remember kicking a pile of four hundred galvanized dust-bins once; you wouldn't think they'd roll with handles on, but they do. Anyway, these did. Three-ten a week I was

getting, and my own master. That's the way to learn a profession."

"But didn't you read any books?" George asked. "Our Sid gets them from night school—big books full of diagrams and drawings; he's a joiner. Pictures of lathes taken to pieces and everything."

"I did better than that," Thorn said. "I wrote one, and it still sells to this day. *Thorn on Totting-up Totals*, it's called, totting-up being a professional term."

"I always said you must of written a book, a man like you," Bella said. "Has it got your name on and all?"

"Quantity surveying: pooh!" said the man with a mouth full of Belgian bun, menacingly. "Nothing in it," he added, seeing our puzzled looks.

"Normally, no," said Thorn mildly. "I could walk round a stock yard in an afternoon and get some figures down on paper. But you try quantity surveying in Ecuador. My firm sent me to look at a bridge-building job over a foaming torrent. When I got there there was no bridge and I had to visualize it. I stood above the roaring flood and kept casting this wretched bridge over in my mind's eye and trying to turn it into tons of cement and foot-runs of steel girders. The first bridge, I heard afterwards, was eight yards short—not bad in half a mile. All my quantities had to be multiplied by point sixteen."

"What's that?" asked Bella.

"Some sort of fraction, I think," said Thorn. "Anyway it was a silly place to build a bridge. All the same, there we were, and to make the chaps work they had the pay office on the other side. Mostly native labour, it was, and every morning the men were lined up on the edge of this yawning gulf and a man across the river would come out waving a bag of gold and our chaps would cheer and go at the job like beavers. Meanwhile I was sending home for bigger and bigger quantities and surveying away for dear life. I used to get on the extreme end of the half-finished bridge and shade my eyes to peer at the distant bank, and I'd shout whatever came into my head to my assistant who was working the semaphore. 'Forty-two thousand eight-inch twelve-gauge metal-thread screws by nine o'clock to-night!' I'd cry, and he'd pass back as much of the signal as he could spell. Five weeks later a huge consignment of copper-disc rivets would arrive, or a sack of four-inch drive-screws. But it was fun while it lasted."

"If that was the Cotopaxi By-pass Link Bridge it didn't last very long," the man with the Belgian bun said. "I know, because I was on it when it collapsed."

"That was a terrible thing, that Tay Bridge—" began the man with the two books under his arm.

"Quiet," we said.

"The first men over were the chaps for their pay," Thorn said. "I sent my assistant for mine. Mind you, there was nothing wrong with the quantities; they were very generous, and I had surveyed every one personally. Some of them I had inspected from every angle, in stack ('*situ*' we used to call it) and in use. As quantities they were perfect. But were they the right quantities? I admit they didn't weld into an

entirely satisfactory bridge. It was all right as far as it went, but it didn't go far enough by eight yards. There were other irregularities too. One official at the court of inquiry said he didn't think twenty-seven feet of seven-by-one country-cut had ever been used before to prop up the middle span of a large bridge where a block of limestone six by nine should have been. But my original estimate was in order. The only thing was, I used that block of limestone for a table, and the men didn't like to ask for it. Then there were those copper-disc rivets: far too many of the men were using them for earrings. One fellow, the foreman, had a ring of them through his nose."

"You remember me," said the man with the mouth full of Belgian bun. "Tom Diggs, left-half in the works team that beat All-Ecuador, sixteen-none."

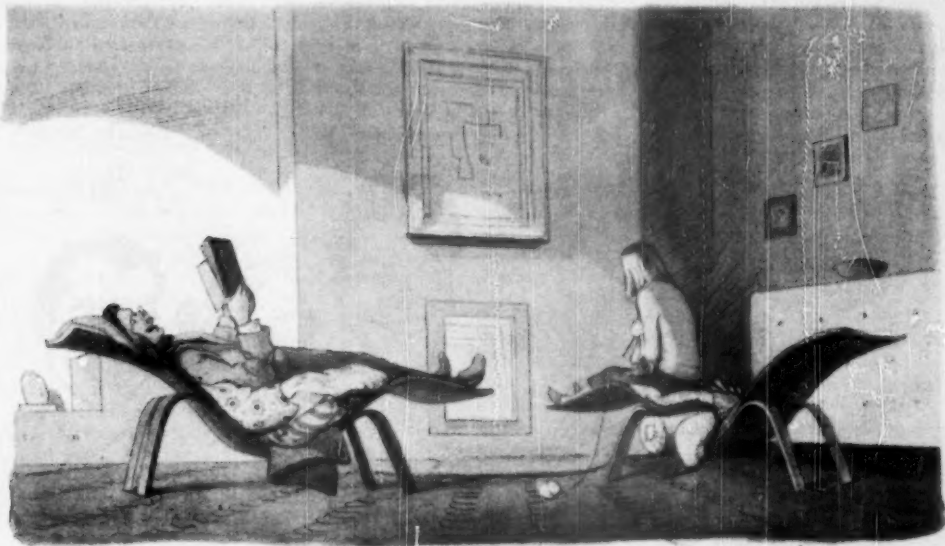
"I knew you at once," Thorn said. "How are you? So the bridge collapsed. I can honestly say (as indeed I did say at the court of inquiry) they were stinted of nothing. They had girders enough and to spare, each stencilled with measurements and 'Care of Mr. Thorn.'"

"I was crowned with one of 'em," Tom Diggs volunteered.

"That great and shining bridge—built on new principles, too, with a sort of left-hand lurch in the middle where they had to correct their aim at the farther shore—crashed into the gorge below!" cried Thorn eloquently. "I had to swim the river in the end to get my money."

"You still got a lump on your head," Bella remarked to the man with the mouth full of Belgian bun.

"Oh, that!" he answered, taking another bite. "I got that the day we played All-Ecuador, and beat them sixteen-none."



Alanson

AT THE PICTURES

Highly Dangerous—Pretty Baby

THE cheerful thriller *Highly Dangerous* (Director: ROY BAKER) brings together again two of the talents responsible for *The October Man*: the director, and the writer, ERIC AMBLER. It isn't as good as the earlier picture; it isn't intellectually satisfying, nor particularly well played, nor even probable; but it is bright, amusing, inventive, quite exciting, and full of good filmdraft, and it deserves marks for enterprise in that it presents MARGARET LOCKWOOD as an entomologist—a gay entomologist with an interest in the adventures of Dick Barton (known here, presumably for reasons of copyright, as Frank Conway, but provided by NOEL JOHNSON with the original Dick Barton's voice). I have been surprised to see one or two very acid comments on this harmless little effort. After all, one isn't supposed to take it seriously; the fact that the entomologist's secret mission (to some place in Central Europe, typical Ambler country) is to find specimens of insects that are being bred to carry disease-germs in war—this fact should not be allowed to cast a gloom over the whole proceedings. There is no more reason to be horrified by the death-dealing insects than by the equally death-dealing secret blue-prints; both are excuses for a pursuit story, but one seems more interesting than the

other because it makes a change. The great thing is the pursuit, with the details of character, place and incident that can be introduced to decorate it. Here these contrive to be constantly entertaining without being particularly fresh: one seems to have encountered these figures often enough before in this sort of story (MARIUS GÖRING is the sinister Chief of Police in summer attire), but—for me at any rate—they are played and manipulated with enough skill to keep them interesting. The final escape from the country is perhaps too easy—I already forget the precise manner of it, but then I should have forgotten it just as surely if it had been more credible. The details of the plot in whodunits and thrillers always, in my experience, vanish from the memory in an hour or two; but the knowledge that one was entertained remains, with the recollection of various pleasing incidents, personalities, scraps of dialogue. Except from a film that sets out to be "significant," few people ask for more.

Another totally unimportant but reasonably entertaining piece is *Pretty Baby* (Director: BREITAGNE WINDUST). This is the sort of thing we used to see Jean Arthur or Ginger Rogers in before the war: a consciously light-hearted fable about a little office girl in love with her boss. Everything depends upon the

variety of the situations and devices that can be woven into the development of this time-worn but profitable theme; here they arise out of the girl's discovery that an infallible way of getting a seat in the subway is to be carrying a baby. She thereupon makes a habit of toting an imitation baby, and always gets a seat, but the foreseeable complications arise—and would arise even without the irascible old bundle of wealth (EDMUND GWEEN) who happens, by one of those coincidences without which comedies like this would fall to the ground, to hear her say that she named the baby after him. BETSY DRAKE brings all her rather intimidating charm to bear on the part of the girl (a dual personality—sometimes extremely vague, sometimes brisk with *savoir vivre*), and the picture has quite a lot of good fun.

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

An early press day makes it harder than usual to know anything about what will be showing in London when this appears; but it's safe to recommend *All A'out Eee* (20/12/50). *The Mudlark* (22/11/50), the Command Performance film, is one of the new releases; quite entertaining, but for enjoyment I prefer the much less pretentious thriller, *The Clouded Yellow* (6/12/50).

RICHARD MALLETT



MARGARET LOCKWOOD

MARGARET LOCKWOOD

BETSY DRAKE

ZACHARY SCOTT

THE REVEALING TOUCH

THAT a few lines drawn with pen, chalk or pencil can tell us when they were drawn, in what country and against what social background, by what artist or type of artist, is really as astonishing as anything in detective fiction.

It recalls the feat of Mr. Austin Freeman's Dr. Thorndyke, who was able, by examining a single hair, to state that an "unknown" was an elderly Oriental who worked in a factory in the East End of London. Any-one who has studied drawings (as Thorndyke examines sections of hair) will make as much of a slender clue. For the trained eye, a delicate fibre of red and black crayon, a certain lightness of touch may assign a drawing to the eighteenth century, an aristocratic society, and proclaim it the work of a Frenchman.

The most mysterious thing of all is that the quality of the drawing gives so much accurate information (though it cannot be put on a slide or looked at under a microscope).

If detection were based simply on details, like the style of dress shown, and other matters of historical fact, it would not be so impressive; but the quality of line is independent of them. The story is told of a celebrated artist, visiting a fellow artist and not finding him at home, who added a stroke of his own to an unfinished sketch in the studio and went off assured that his friend would know he had called. The additional line, so full of character, was as good as a visiting-card.

Thus in the quality of the superb eighteenth-century French drawings which have recently been exhibited at the Matthiessen Gallery in London there was the signature of an age. The personal touch of Watteau (so lightly caressing a cheek, so sharply defining the movement of a hand) was supreme and unmistakable; yet not only in his work or that of Boucher and Fragonard but in the drawings of artists less well-known like St. Aubin was the signature plain to see.



It resides in that charm, lightness, gracefulness or gaiety (the terms are almost the same) which as clearly distinguishes the drawings from the work of the seventeenth century as from that of the nineteenth. Even if you did not know that when they were made the despotism of Louis XIV was over, that the lords and ladies (on whom it had weighed as heavily as on the peasant) had rushed joyfully from the Grand Monarque's school, like children to play, you might deduce it. There is no pomp in them, no majestic and formal notion of beauty; nor is there anything painful or sombre. Instead there is charm, the playful charm of an intelligent and irresponsible society which has taken possession of the artist's mood and governs the way he puts pencil to paper. The sprightly movement of his pencil in itself reveals that he belongs to an age of gaiety—that gaiety which revolutions, at all times and in all ages, unfortunately tend to eclipse.

WILLIAM GAUNT

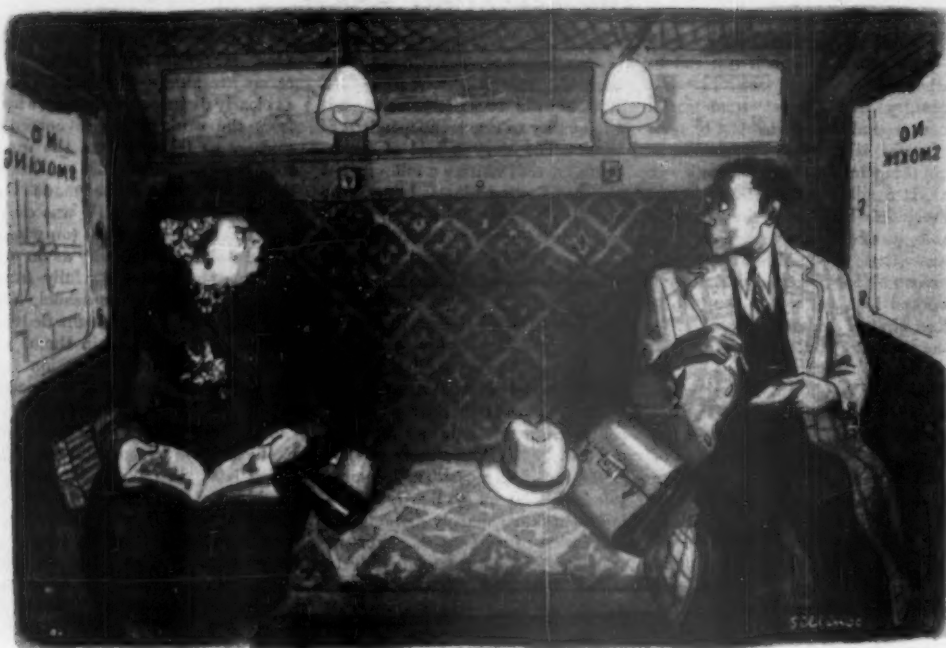
TWO YOUNG MEN IN THE STREET

LEANING on the wall outside the Regal
A boy adjusts his red-and-orange tie.
Outside the Regal, smoking a dog-end,
Bert watches the girls walking by.

"She's just my type . . . I wish I'd got some cash . . .
I saw her at the Bop Club, Monday night . . .
I wish I knew her name . . .
I think I'll grow a 'tache . . .
Aw, what's the use?—I'd never trust a dame—
Buttons and bows—
They're out to get you all tied up, all right!
But not this kiddie; they
Won't get the chance!
Take a girl out—go to the movies, or a dance—
Then find another . . . That's the crafty way;
'Cos what to-morrow's gonna bring—nobody
knows.
Work a good racket, an' you'll have your fun,
Just use your loaf—look after Number One;
Don't make no friends, an' then you won't get hurt."
. . . Says Bert.

Standing next to Bert outside the Regal
A boy ignores the people walking by.
Outside the Regal, hands in his pockets,
Smudger Smith stares at the sky.

"Another month, and I'll be in the Army.
About time, too; I'm cheesed off with the job . . .
I couldn't stick it here—
This town'd drive you barmy . . .
The same old dirty streets, year after year . . .
If this is all—
It's not enough . . . P'raps when I join the mob
I'll see the world a bit;
The Med . . . The East . . .
That's what I want; that's where I want to go. At least,
I think it is . . . I can't be sure of it.
There might be something else I want. Something
quite small.
Somewhere to live. A place to hang your hat.
A girl . . . A home . . . You know, if I had that,
I b'lieve I'd settle down, and never budge."
. . . Says Smudger.



"How would you like it if I got into a smoker and didn't smoke?"

AS WE SEE IT

NOW that television has won enough of a place in life for people to be saying it shouldn't be there, I want to point out that one section of the community has always taken this invention calmly and at its proper value; has, indeed, learnt that if you don't want it on you needn't have it, and that if other people want some particular programme you needn't look or listen, and nor need they really. I refer, of course, to us women. Why, if we had succumbed to television the way men have there would be no more socks darned, no more coal buckets tipped clatteringly on the fire, no more of those telephone chats that last half an hour and paralyse the room behind them. You might almost say that Providence deliberately endowed us women with the mind and character to keep television in its place, even giving us that streak of perfectionism which starts us tinkering with the focus knob after the others, as we then realize, have got it right.

I think I speak for all of us when I say that women have absolutely nothing against a television set when it first comes into the home. Indeed the bigger it is the better we will be pleased, for now we can move the furniture. I don't know why we're so keen on moving furniture; why we spend whole minutes of our valuable time gazing round an already satisfactorily arranged

room, telling ourselves that if we just moved the table to under the window—and sneaking up and giving it a shove that slops the water out of the flowers and returns us to sanity. You can see what a chance television has brought us. When once we've got the armchairs and the sofa artistically regrouped no one's going to mess them up for some trifling reason like wanting a better view of the set.

Characteristically, we women watch television from the side. Science has given the screen just the right curve: not enough to make the people viewing from the middle feel at all happy about us but enough for us to see perfectly well, though we aren't giving that away. We have a special voice for saying "Oh, no, I like it here," which brings in the little wooden chair we're sitting on and invalidates the statement. What makes it so unfair to both sides is that we do like it there. Apart from suiting our viewing technique (which I shall explain presently) and our curious prejudice against comfort, a small hard chair over by the wastepaper basket gives us a better chance of jumping up and darting about.

I will say for us that we never dart between the viewers and the screen without apologizing quite charmingly, so as to make sure that for those few

seconds they can't hear either. And how we dart! One minute it's the coal, another it's the coffee cups or the washing we've left in the garden; and, because these are extra-television activities and—for I am speaking of social occasions—might seem boorishly out of tune, we atone by now and then pausing before the set, even bending a little towards it, and staring raptly before we dart on.

To understand exactly how we look at and react to a television programme you must imagine us watching it alone. Our first few evenings we behaved as every beginner does: we sat in the dark, rather too near, goggling because the people on the screen were moving about and talking. Now, of course, we keep the light on; though we do remember, and go back to the sitting-room and put it out, leaving the actors chunnering luminously in dumb-show until we are ready to join them by the fire. When we are settled with our knitting or darning we turn the sound up and the vision very slightly down, to show the thing that it is really only a wireless set with trimmings. I wouldn't say that we don't look up every few seconds, but only to check the goings-on; or that there aren't occasional lapses when, our needles in guilty abeyance, we give ourselves entirely to the little grey scene before us. I mean to one side of our chair and in just the wrong place for the light; but these are lapses indeed to those who consider a three-act play a conspiracy to undermine the character.

That may be why we like those little snippety programmes best; a returning traveller trying on a feathered war-dress or an inventor showing us his clothes horse. Anything domestic is, I need not say, very near our heart, and there is no finer example of what we mean by the message and purpose of television than the cookery lessons. A pressure cooker the same as ours! A pudding basin inside with paper on top tied round with real string! And a suet pudding that nearly came in half when they turned it out! And the beauty of it is that we can watch all this with a clear conscience, because we're learning—if all we're learning is how tidy other people keep their kitchen tables.

But that is concentrated viewing, and rare. To see us at our most typical you should watch us viewing a boxing match, as our wretched husbands have to. For a long time we will take no notice; then, laying down our work or our book, we will lean sideways, an action that boxing fans must have come to dread. We don't say "Are they boxing?" because we've asked that already. What we want to know now is why the boxer the towel is being flapped at is so small or, alternatively, why the man flapping it is so big. Our husbands will tear themselves from the commentary to answer, a little shortly, that this is a fly-weight contest. "But he's so *tiny*," we say. "Isn't the other man big as well?" When our husbands have been persuaded that he might be we come to the point that has really been worrying us: "They're wearing vests!"

And if they hear no more from us until, just before the end, we ask "Who's won?" then they are lucky.

ANDE

CONSOLATION

LET Objurgation, with embittered brow,
Survey the year from Candlemas till Now;
Remark each hope frustrate, each effort vain,
Crime, rising prices, war, elections, rain;
A year of kidnapped babes and stranded whales
To point a moral and adorn the gaols;
Two men alone, consistent if nefarious,
Hold our respect, St. Swithin and Aquarius.
Now we re-dread the peril that is yellow,
(But—Smith was wonderful on Supertello.)

In full-blown dignity see Boussac stand,
Pride in his eyes, and prizes in his hand;
Strange flying saucers flash across the States,
But here we watch the flying Cups and Plates.
Above the wicked world a blue moon shimmers
On fleeing scientists, and Channel swimmers;
Young men seek llama-land to kick a ball,
Others leave Lama-land to seek Nepal.
What now may come there is of course no telling,
(But still—the Cambridgeshire was won by Kelling.)

J. B. N.



CHRISTMAS HAM

THE dearth of Shakespearean productions has been a tragedy for many of our actors. Fortunately the scene has brightened for them as the Christmas season has brought new opportunities.

Roger Bigly has been one of the great Falstaffs of our time. "A well rounded performance" was how the *Huddersfield Examiner* put it in a review that few of us will remember. But these last years he has had a thin time. I always had a high opinion of his work, and it was with keen expectation that I entered the Oxford Street store and fell in behind the queue of children.

I was not disappointed. Bigly plays the traditional rôle magnificently. The scarlet and ermine hang naturally on his gigantic frame, his eyes sparkle with

Christmas spirit, and the rich profusion of his whiskers must be seen to be believed. He shook with laughter as he called for his sack and rapidly relieved the children of their half-crowns in exchange for huge, gaily-wrapped parcels. It was a memorable performance, marred only by the faint odour of whisky that hung in the air and the occasional robust expletive that I feared might send an irate parent hastening to the manager. All the same, Bigly is worth seeing. He was to be found, this year, at the far end of the toy department, between the restaurant and the wines and spirits counter.

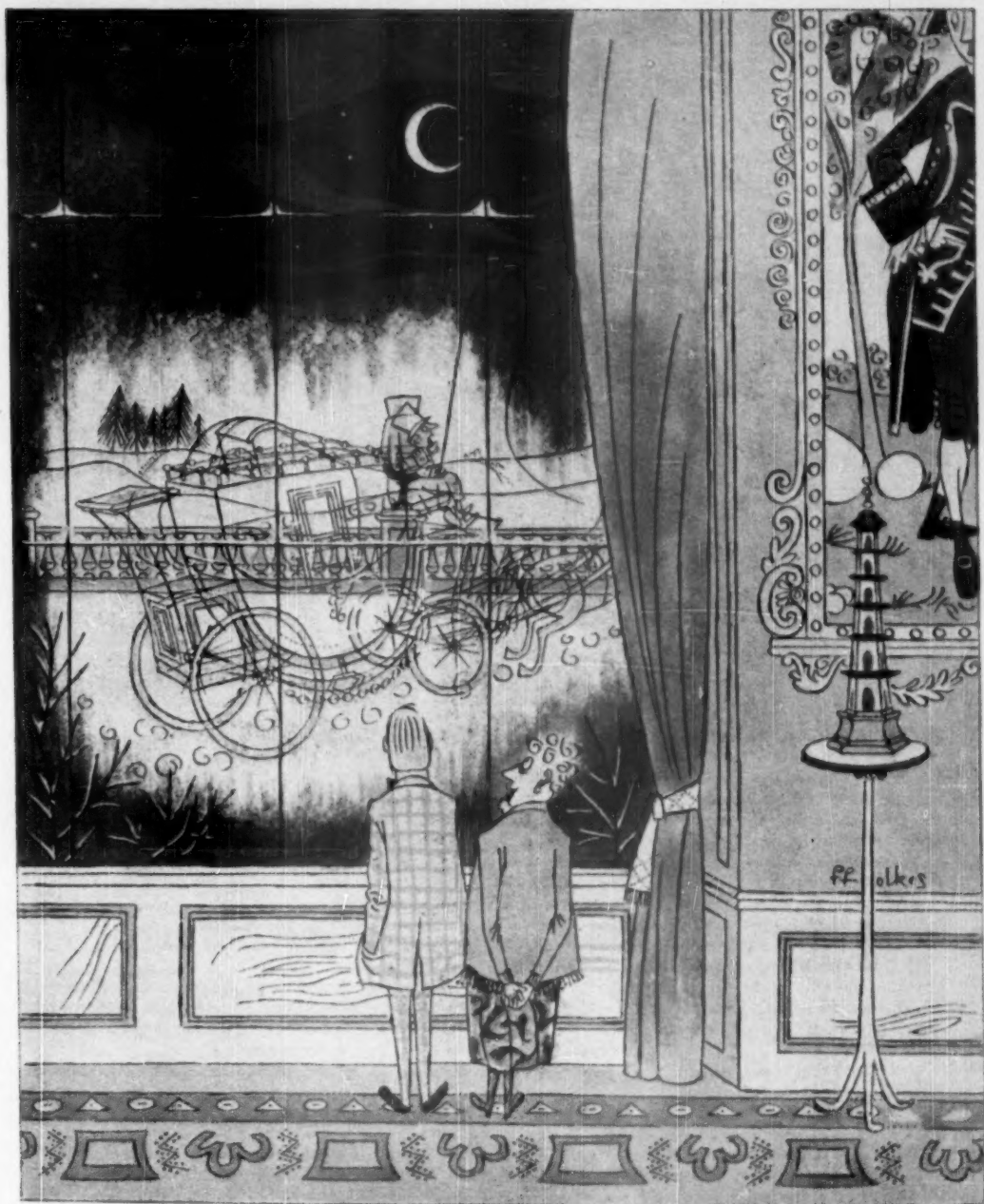
Simon Hardways was featured at a large suburban emporium. I had not seen him since he played Shylock at Stratford, and I confess I was disappointed. He acted with force and integrity, but somehow it did not come off. No doubt he caught the spirit of the management. Perhaps that was the trouble. The vulpine features, the rasping voice, the clutching hand—to me they were not quite right for Christmas. Others seemed to share my feelings. I watched a poor mite suppress a shudder as he patted her head and tried a sympathetic "I have a daughter . . ." taking five shillings from the mother and handing over a small packet of chalks.

I must say, too, that I found the setting confusing. Hardways has always been associated with modernist productions, but this time he has overreached himself. The symbolism of the giant shoe was quite beyond me. Nor could I see the significance of the Red Indian and the pirate hovering in the background.

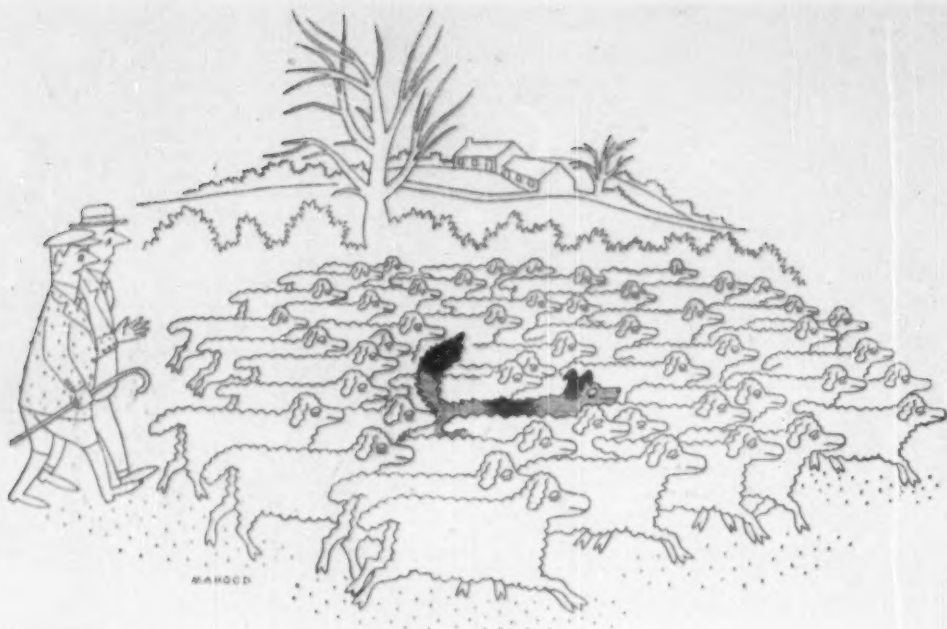
My next visit was to Kensington to renew acquaintance with Rex Oldman. I still have vivid recollections of his *Lear*, although it was long ago at the old Runcorn Festival. He is a striking figure even in his decrepitude—he must be nearly ninety. His appearance is somewhat crumbled and deboshed, but the far-away look in his watery eyes tells of an inner peace. Indeed, he seemed almost in a trance as he mechanically held out his hand to his young visitors. An attendant, an amiable but silly fellow paid to keep an eye on him, told me that the old man had once dozed off for two hours and awakened to find his sack emptied. The children had naturally hesitated to disturb such regal slumber. I saw a five-year-old girl, on whom he had absent-mindedly bestowed an air-gun, tug three times at his beard before he came to with a start. "Pray, do not mock me; I am a very foolish fond old man . . ." he began, and with beautiful dignity he exchanged the gun for a home perm set. There was an infinite compassion in his every act, and my eyes moistened as he limply shook my hand and presented me with *Our Pets Painting Book*.

It should not be thought that Shakespearean talent is getting into a rut. While many had the Santa Clause in their Christmas contracts others are exploring new ground. There are the pantomimes, for instance; and it will be a treat to see Cedric Ireland again.* His Prospero is still fresh in my memory, and this time he is appearing in *Robinson Crusoe*. It should be a great occasion, especially as Nigel Brown, who was such a colourful Othello, will be in support.





"It still drives past regularly every Boxing Day and the fiendish screams seem to be losing conviction."



"He's on their side now."

ANYTHING THERE FOR ME?

THIS was a man, living alone in a flat in London, who went away for Christmas.

He went away early, avoiding the rush, and leaving no forwarding address because he was coming back on the 26th and posts are unpredictable at Christmas. But on the 21st he began to feel uneasy. He thought he had remembered to send everybody Christmas cards, but suppose some arrived, while he was away, from people he had forgotten? On the 22nd he rang up the building in which his flat was and asked for the porter.

After a time the porter came on and said "Yes?"

"This is Mr. Mupp," said the man. "Look—is there anything there for me?"

There was a pause. Then the porter said "There's seven envelopes. Should I send them on? You never—"

"No—no, don't send them on. I just want to know who they're from."

"From?" the porter repeated, as if upset by the idea of correspondence.

"Are any of them Christmas cards?"

"I wouldn't know without looking inside, would I?"

"Have they got penny stamps?"

"Ah, that's an idea," said the porter. "See, if they're penny stamps they might be Christmas cards, mightn't they? No."

"No?"

"Ah, I was just saying that to George, there's someone wants to pay his milk bill. No. No."

"Are you saying that to George or me?"

The porter preferred to pause for a few moments and then say "Five of them have penny stamps. No, six. But that one's got an ad for a book on it."

"A book?—no, never mind, never mind. Now listen. I want you to look in the other five and tell me who they're from."

"From?" said the porter again.

"Just take out the card and look inside. What does it say?"

A rustling was audible on the telephone. Then the porter's voice came through, reading with a mistrustful intonation the words "Though many a greeting may assail your ear, it would not—"

"Not the printed stuff," Mr. Mupp interrupted.

"What's written underneath?"

"Nothing written underneath." The porter sounded pleased. "Nothing at all."

"Nothing? You mean it doesn't say who sent it?"

"Well, it says from Mr. and Mrs. J. Arbuthnot Crowninside-Anstruther, but that's—"

"You could have said that first, that's all I wanted."

"That's printed letters," said the porter sulkily. "You said—"

"Yes, but I meant—if the name isn't printed,

it—Well, never mind. That's one. What's the second?"

Further rustling. "Well," came the porter's doubtful tones, "I'd say it's a sort of, well, like a bit of parchment folded half one way and then before it quite gets to where it would——"

"I mean who's it from?"

"From? . . . Oh. Well. It says A Merry Christmas and stuff and then it says From Joey and Slingback. In writing."

"Joey? Joey and who?"

"Slingback. 'S what it looks like. I thought to myself that's a queer name the minute I saw it, but you never can tell nowadays what people want to call themselves. I knew a chap used to call himself the Camille Desmoulins of the Mile End Road."

"Did he write that on his Christmas cards?—no, never mind. Can you see what the postmark is on that?"

"Looks like Doormat," said the porter dubiously. "Doormat, Essex. You ever hear of a place called Doormat?—no, I tell you what it is: Dovercourt. That's what it is. Nice little place."

"Doverc— Oh, I know. *John and Elizabeth*," said Mr. Mupp, "not Joey and Slingback. Well, that's all right. What about——"

Pip—pip—pip.

"You want to go on? Should I hang up?"

"I want to go on," said Mr. Mupp. "What about the third?"

"What third?"

"The third card."

"Oh. Well . . . *Oooooh*," said the porter, "this is a good one, this is. Handsome. All bits of red and gold round the edge. Must have cost something."

"Who's it fr— Is there a name in it?"

"It says With seasonable greetings and compliments from the Association for the Advancement . . . No, wait a minute. This isn't for you at all, it got put in——"

"Ah. Are the other two mine?"

"Oh, *they're* yours all right. *They're* very small."

"That makes it certain. Well?"

Another pause filled with rustling. Then the porter said in a tone of pleased astonishment "Well, do you know what? They aren't cards. Receipts, that's what they are: receipts. The penny stamps put me wrong, see?"

"Might happen to anybody," said Mr. Mupp. "Well, good-bye. Thank you. Happy Christmas."

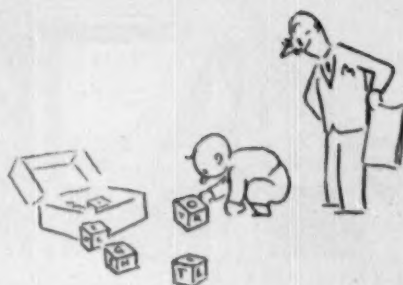
"The compliments of the season to *you*," said the porter.

RICHARD MALLETT

"Only 32 people were prosecuted last year for drunkenness in the Staincross Division of the West Riding, which comprises a population of 124,150,258 licensed premises and 31 registered clubs with a total membership of over 47,000."

Yorkshire paper

The clubs seem to be fighting an uphill battle.

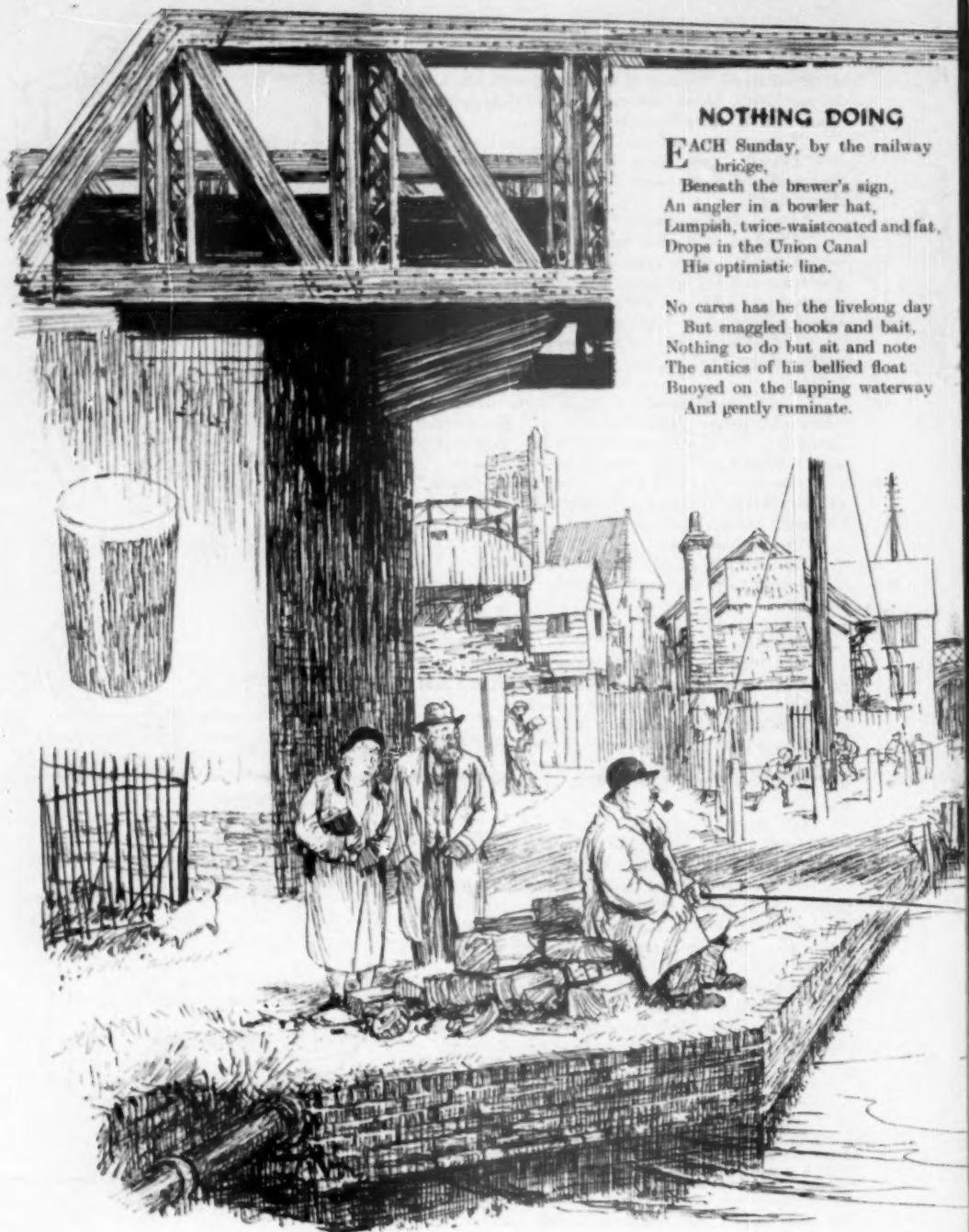


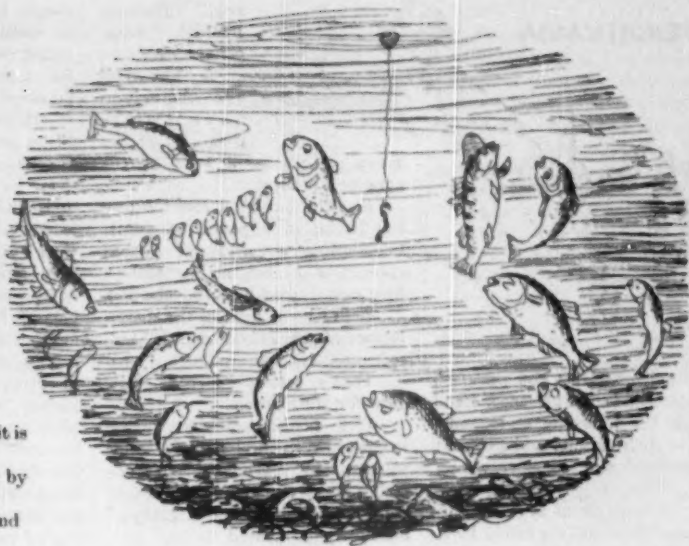
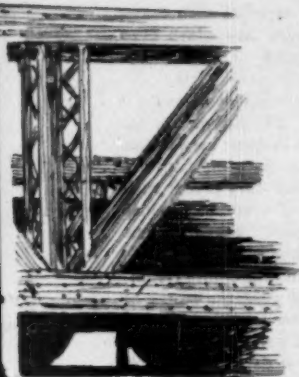
NOTHING DOING

EACH Sunday, by the railway bridge,

Beneath the brewer's sign,
An angler in a bowler hat,
Lumpish, twice-waistcoated and fat,
Droops in the Union Canal
His optimistic line.

No cares has he the livelong day
But snagged hooks and bait,
Nothing to do but sit and note
The antics of his belled float
Buoyed on the lapping waterway
And gently ruminate.





While towpath bores, whose joy it is
To ask about the sport,
Need but a glance in threading by
To realize that his spaniel eye
Is not concerned with fishing and
Has nothing to report.

For this man's pleasure is to take
His contemplative fill
Far from the omnipresent stress
Of headlines in the Sunday Press
And cultivate the quiet art
Of merely sitting still;

Then, when the water shows the
stars,
To board an evening train,
Silent, in pipe-enchanted thought
Of monstrous chub he might have
caught,
Arranging with himself to come
And do the same again.



E. H. Sheppard

PENCILVANIA



FOR my next trick you will need a pencil and some patience. Read through the following statements, examine their validity and cross out the sections you consider superfluous. Ready?

1. A lead pencil is six, eight, seven and three-eighths inches long.

2. "Lead pencil" is written here in inverted commas because I am quoting from Rebecca West, Immanuel Kant or Raymond Houston, chairman of the Base Metals Development Board; because I am addicted to this literary affectation; because the term is something of a misnomer.

3. Assuming that it is used right down to its last molecule—which is impossible—a pencil will draw a line fifty yards long, three miles long, thirty-five miles long, twice round the Equator.

4. The letters "HB" on a pencil mean "hard black," "heavy

bold," "Harbour Board," "hexagonal bevel."

5. The average American buys twice, thrice, half as

many pencils in a year as the average Englishman.

6. The "lead" is inserted into the holder of a pencil by gentle hammering, as a liquid poured through a funnel, as a "bullet" fired into chemically softened wood.

7. Cedar is used in the manufacture of pencils because it is hard, soft, aromatic, palatable.

That's enough for a start. Now for the answers.

Well, pencils are seven inches long—always. And nobody seems to know why. "We make 'em seven inches long," one manufacturer told me, "because all our plant and machinery is geared to the production of seven-inch pencils. It's one of those things, I guess." My view, as a mere consumer, is that the pencil settled into its longitudinal rut only after much research, trial and error. At seven inches it is just about the maximum size for any rigid and sharp body carried vertically in the waistcoat pocket and balanced horizontally on the ear, and just about the minimum size for a measuring rod held at arm's length by artists specializing in still life. Anything much longer would tend to

puncture the person in the region of the scapula; anything shorter would drive artists back into the chillier corners of their studios. Pencils do not of course remain seven inches long: sooner or later they are whittled or chewed down to stubs that fail to bridge the gap between the finger tips and the fleshy webbing between thumb and first finger. They are then thrown into the fire. Nobody, however, has actually seen a pencil-stub thrown into the fire, and no one would readily admit to the practice. To

ensure against this kind of waste all schools are supplied with things called compasses, into which even the most stunted of pencils can be fitted.

There is no lead (*plumbum*) in a "lead pencil." The Egyptians, the Greeks and the Romans used leaden discs for ruling lines on papyrus, and fourteenth-century artists used leaden pencils of a sort to produce their "silver point" drawings, but ever since 1564—yes, 1564—pencils have been made of graphite (*plumbago*). In that year the world of art and literature was thrown into a state of wild excitement by the discovery of rich deposits of black carbon (black lead, graphite or plumbago) at Borrowdale in Cumberland. For the first time in history a really black pencil became available. Feverishly men applied themselves to the task of inventing a good rubber.



The Borrowdale graphite was so pure and solid that it could be used in its natural state. At first it was sold in rough sticks wrapped with string; then it was sawn into square rods and encased in wooden shafts, and the English Guild of Pencil Makers grew fat on their world monopoly. At one time this Borrowdale graphite was worth ten shillings an ounce. Armed guards accompanied it to London; and to conserve the deposits mining operations were restricted to six weeks in the year.

A good pencil of medium hardness (Question 3) will rule a line thirty-five miles long—from Leicester, say, to a point some thirty-five miles along the Fosse Way. Pencil manufacturers demonstrate the qualities of their products with an impressive array of scientific impedimenta. One machine, the "mileage meter," measures the linear life-span of a pencil on a





revolving drum of paper; another, the "pressure scale," indicates the poundage of beef needed to snap the pencil's point; a thing called a "reflectometer" gauges the density of a pencil's blackness; and an even more formidable gadget, a structure shaped like an oil-derrick, tests the pencil's smoothness. You've no idea of the trouble they take.

The mark "HB" on a pencil means almost anything, usually nothing. To most people a pencil is just a pencil—that is, not a pen. One pencil is distinguished from another only by its nominal ownership: *voici le crayon de mon oncle, de ma tante, etc.* Grades of hardness or blackness mean little to the average pencil consumer—which explains why so many crossword puzzles lie in tatters long before they have

been completed, why writing pads become deeply and heavily scored with writing in bas-relief, why children, grocers, bookmakers and cricket scorers develop the odious habit of licking the point of a pencil.

A pity, this, when the manufacturers take the trouble to make



pencils in at least seventeen different grades ranging from "6B" to "9H" and including the popular "HB" and the odd "F." Harassed by appeals for economy from the rating authorities our schools usually make do with pencils that are much too hard. A purely personal view is that children should never be allowed to use anything harder than 2B. Soft pencils need sharpening more often, it is true, but the saving in table-tops, spectacles and rubber is more than adequate compensation.

Americans buy nearly three times as many pencils per head as the English. This is, we must suppose, indicative of their higher standard of living. It may also indicate that their ball-pens sometimes dry up and refuse to write under water. I have no information, at present, on the consumption of pencils in Manchuria or Bolivia.

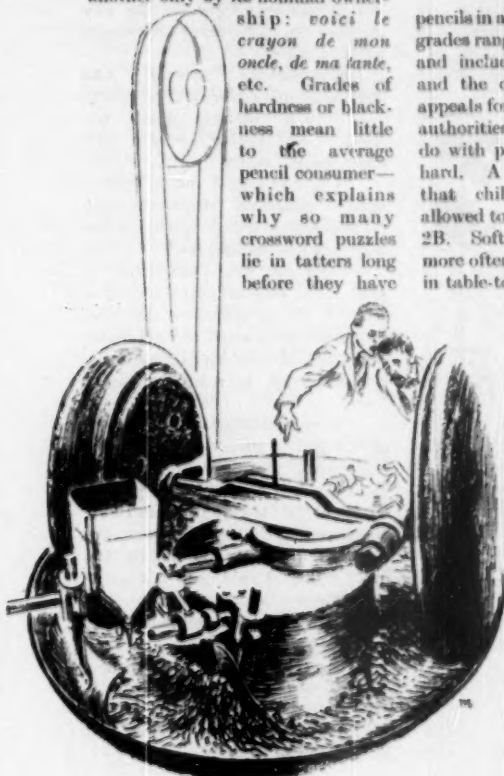
The lead is inserted into the holder (Question 6) by none of the methods enumerated. What happens is that

imported slats of cedar are fed into a machine that cuts semi-circular grooves in them, that lengths of graphite are placed in the grooves and the top half of the sandwich clamped down with glue, that the sandwich is then sliced into pencils, round or hexagonal, which are trimmed, sandpapered, lacquered, polished and stamped with the maker's name and one or more "Bs" or "Hs." The whole process is what one expects of modern industry—ingenious, rapid and highly efficient. The graphite of Borrowdale is exhausted, and sup-

plies are now drawn from Ceylon, Mexico and elsewhere. And the "lead" is no longer a simple chunk of graphite. At a celebrated Tottenham factory the other day I watched tons of powdered graphite and levigated china clay begin a six-weeks course of steady grinding and mixing, and I saw a six-weeks-old batch of "lead" emerge from a diamond die—under the pressure of a sixty-ton piston—into long, pliable cords. They looked exactly like black spaghetti until they were safely encased in their turquoise holders.

Yes (Question 7) cedar, and only cedar. No other timber, it seems, has all the necessary properties. It is strong enough to support a fine point, soft enough to whittle easily, straight-grained and free from knots and resin. And of course it smells like pencils.

BERNARD HOLLOWOOD



THEY LAUGHED WHEN I STOOD UP

"YOU mean he actually plays tunes?" said Mrs. Whimper, sniffing the soap dog she had won for charades.

I sipped my sherry enigmatically.

"He's wonderful," said Cora. "It isn't as though he used music. Just out of his head."

"What kind of a whistle?" asked Mrs. Whimper.

"You mean a tin-whistle?" said a man called Humblestone, who had made everyone die laughing at his witty contributions to the Consequences.

"Oh, no," I said haughtily. "A flageolet."

"A sort of metal tube with six holes in it?" said Humblestone, thrusting a crystallized plum into his mouth without looking.

"Well—yes," I said.

"That's a tin-whistle," said Humblestone stickily.

"You're probably thinking of a penny-whistle," I said.

"Oh, I don't know how much they cost," munched Humblestone, and several people laughed. (It is surprising to me how ready some adults are to snigger at the most witless remarks.)

"Penny-whistles or tin-whistles," I said, "have the same principle as the flageolet, but the

flageolet is in tune. Concert pitch. Mine is in B flat."

"Oh, but you have two," said Cora. "That dear little shiny small one, and the brassy one with a dent where somebody trod on it."

"Well, yes," I said. "I have an E flat as well, but it's rather shrill."

"How complicated," said a lady with a sausage on a stick.

"I used to have one in C," I went on, "but somebody stuck it in the garden as an earth-rod, and it rusted."

"Well, why didn't you bring one?" said the jolly fat man with a cardboard fez.

"He did," said Cora, and pulled it out of my inside pocket with a flourish.

"My dear!" said the lady with the sausage. "May I blow it?"

I passed it across with a knowing smile, and she blew it, and waggled her fingers over the holes the way people do, producing a single, piercing note.

Humblestone sneered, and several people covered their ears.

"You're blowing much too hard," I said, taking it back. "It's quite simple really."

"Oh, I'm sure I couldn't get a note!" exclaimed Mrs. Whimper. "I remember trying Alfred's oboe when he was in *Iolanthe*."

"You just cover the holes," I said, "and take off one finger at a time." I played a scale, and Humblestone started the applause, wiped his lips with his handkerchief, and sat back to read the *Radio Times*.

"How wonderful!" said a very pretty girl in green. "Do play a little tune!"

I laughed casually, and played "I Want To Be Happy," and there was a general chatter of excitement.

"I didn't get the middle bit quite right," I said, and played it again, with two mistakes.

"Can you play anything else?" asked Mrs. Whimper.

"Oh, yes," I said, and stood up. "I play much better standing," I said.

I played "Darktown Strutters' Ball," introducing one or two



"Break our necks gettin' 'em quick lunches, and then they spend 'arf an hour sortin' out their ruddy black 'Omburg 'ats..."

tremolo touches of which I am rather proud. This produced cries of "Bravo!" and "Very nice too!" Humblestone turned a page of the *Radio Times*.

"I love the twiddly bits," said Mrs. Whimper.

"Doesn't he look like Benny Goodman!" said the pretty, intelligent girl in green.

Flushed with praise, I broke into "Phil the Fluter's Ball" without thinking, and tripped myself up in the part about the toot on the flute. Fortunately they had started to sing by then, so hardly anybody noticed, except Humblestone.

The man in the fez then requested a classical piece, and after some deliberation I started "Green-sleeves"—unfortunately on the wrong note. I was in rather deep water by the time somebody had the presence of mind to start clapping.

"Of course," I said, "that sounds much better in the open air."

Nobody suggested that we should adjourn to the front garden, so I sat down amid a delighted hubbub of congratulation, and looked smugly across at Humblestone.

"Let's have a look at that thing," said Humblestone, stifling a yawn.

Cora passed it to him. He tried it for size, and put it in his mouth very clumsily amid general laughter, and crossed his ankles. Then, leaning back, he played "The Merry Wives of Windsor" overture from beginning to end, without a hitch.

In dead silence he handed it to Cora.

"Of course," he said, "I play much better standing."

As I told Cora on the way home, the fact still remains that a tin-whistle is not a flageolet.

"Tom Arnold presents
Scotland's Finest Pantomime
'CINDERELLA'

Harry Gordon, Alec Finlay, Robert
Wilson, Duncan Macrae, Donald Layne-
Smith, Lisbeth Lennan.

Now Booking."

Theatre Adet.

Wait for it, wait for it!



"Henry's terribly good at making things out of old television sets."

BACK ROOM JOYS

EATING THINGS IN THE STREET

NO doubt it is effete,
Getting pleasure from eating things in the street:
A more primitive, red-blooded society
Would be publicly open-air-die'y
And not give the matter a thought.
But us—these chestnuts that we have bought,
These liquorice all-sorts, etc., according to season,
In their wide-mouthed but tightly-closed bag—
We have to invent a reason
Before the thing can be done . . .
We are doing it for a rag,
Nobody knows us, or oh very well then, just one.

And that's what must give it its spice—
The feeling that it's not really nice.
We are being bold, we are kicking over the traces,
When we were young they'd have called us "little
disgraces,"
But here we're asserting ourselves—and that tickles
our vanity.
We are also, quite rightly too, proud
Of proving to ourselves—and the crowd—
Our common humanity. JUSTIN RICHARDSON

AT THE PLAY

Lace on Her Petticoat
(AMBASSADORS)

A Glass of Water (MERCURY)



MAKE a dramatic, amusing, and human play about a broken school-girl friendship of the 'eighties? Difficult, to say the least; yet Miss AIMEE STUART has done it in *Lace on Her Petticoat*, with a touch so sure that we sigh to see the final curtain go down. It is a tight-rope job of course, a theatrical high-wire act from which a single false step would have plunged her into mawkishness and giggles, and it must therefore be applauded first as a feat of skill; but what will stick in the memory is its sympathy with the common heart-breaks of youth.

In other hands it might easily have been insufferably novelettish. The daughter of Scottish aristocrats seizes the chance of her governess's illness to make friends with a village girl whose mother knows her place as the marchioness's milliner and whose grandmother, a proud old body, is convinced that God ordained the British social system.



A Glass of Water

Royal Command

Officer of the Guard—

MR. VERNON GREEVES

The Queen—MISS AGNES LAUGHLAN



Lace on Her Petticoat

Mrs. Oliphant—Miss MURIEL AKED; *Elspeth McNairn*—Miss ELEANOR MACREADY; *Alexandra Carmichael*—Miss PERLITA NEILSON; *Hamish Colquhoun*—MR. ELLIS IRVING

The two children get on so famously, finding such delight in each other's ignorance of how life is lived at the opposite end of the pitch, that apprehensions melt. *Alexandra*, poised and courteous, combines the grand manner with a turn for sceptical inquiry; *Elspeth* is a simple winner, bright as a cricket and overflowing with good nature. She gets an invitation to *Alexandra's* birthday party at the castle and nearly bursts with excitement when her grandmother makes her a petticoat trimmed with real lace. But, would you believe it, *Alexandra* has fudged the card, and the marchioness (we never meet this steely gadabout, but *Finero* has often told us of her), returning from Monte Carlo to discover *Elspeth's* mother being courted by a man sacked from the estate for speaking irreverently to the nobles, cancels the invitation and puts the cottage out of bounds. At this *Alexandra* attempts suicide, and is saved by the rugged socialist; and after the girls have said good-bye, which makes a touching scene, he is accepted by *Elspeth's* mother and we leave the family about to try the freer air of Canada.

It is a refreshingly natural play, full of humour and good observation of character, and its taut little crises have overtones charged with a larger commentary. Mr. WILLARD STOKER has produced it most perceptively, and two very young actresses give performances worth going a long

way to watch, Miss ELEANOR MACREADY as *Elspeth*, Miss PERLITA NEILSON as *Alexandra*. They are in perfect contrast, and their acting is notably free from affectation. Miss MURIEL AKED, whom I rejoice to see again, plays the nice, acid granny, Miss SOPHIE STEWART *Elspeth's* coquettish mother, and the casting continues excellent with Mr. ELLIS IRVING as the village Hampden and Mr. DAVID KEIR as a hobgoblin old footman in a top hat. The piece should run like a winged partridge.

SCRIBE, who turned out plays of jig-saw complexity as it were on a belt conveyer, is a rarity in London, and Mr. ASHLEY DUKES' adaptation, *A Glass of Water*, has collector's value. The court of Queen Anne, seen by a Frenchman more anxious for his absurdly well-oiled plot than for history, would be comic enough by itself, without the note of burlesque introduced by Mr. ROLLO GAMBLE, which seemed to me, as nearly always it must be, a pity. And this company could certainly have carried a straight production.

Recommended

Pantomimes ahoy! But meanwhile a safe double is *His Excellency* (Piccadilly), a forceful play about politics, and *To Dorothy, a Son* (Savoy), an ingenious bubble containing Einstein and a bassinet.

ERIC KEOWN

BRAVE OLD WORLD, 1950

IN our family we always play "News Items" round about Christmas, just to remind us what the world is really like. All entries have to come from the current year's news and be supported by clippings. If your family haven't tried "News Items," now is the time for them to start preparing for 1951.

Aunt Jane opened with the bus driver in Finland who stopped to pick up a dusky figure waving from the roadside and found it was a bear. Uncle Edward riposted with the wild boar that charged a car on the Kassel-Frankfurt road and sent it into three somersaults; the car hit a second car, which overturned too; no one was hurt, not even the boar, which after thus registering its opinion of civilization retired to the woods to celebrate its bloodless victory. The kitten that climbed the Matterhorn scored nothing; everyone had that.

Last Christmas we were all convinced that Cousin Jim's particularly bizarre clippings were privately printed forgeries. But this year his Arctic three-toed woodpeckers seemed genuine enough; these birds, acting in concert with the hairy and the downy woodpeckers, saved the American taxpayer the best part of two million dollars, appropriated for clearing the Colorado national forests of the Engelmann spruce bark beetle, by suddenly moving in and doing the work themselves free.

The prize in the animal section went to my wife with her hen who laid silver eggs. Señor Julio Bernardo, respected citizen of Murcia in Spain, was sitting down to a fried egg, which his mother had purchased in the local market, when he observed that the yolk was comfortably speckled with pellets of solid silver.

In the natural science section the blue moons and ams of last September were at once counted out. Even the blue rain, which fell in Dorset shortly after, proved to be common knowledge. A reluctant honourable mention went to my cousin Judy's low cloud, which acted as a prism and by breaking up

the sunlight into the colours of the spectrum turned the whole city of Vienna a brilliant violet for eight minutes. But remembering what other years had achieved in the way of parti-coloured moons, five-tailed, double-headed comets, and showers of fish, frogs and snails, we awarded no prizes in this section for 1950.

In the educational section my niece Alice, who teaches embroidery, usually wins. She didn't disappoint us. There was no challenger after we had heard her extract from the Old Girls' Corner in a school magazine: "June Polson has married a cotton manufacturer from Bolton; Sally Fiklon has married a member of the Foreign Service; Elizabeth Follic has married."

There were some striking entries under art and international affairs, but the human interest section is always the high light of the game. There was the man who found a bag, containing £400, in a street telephone kiosk. There was the lady who died at the age of eighty-eight in Okna, Sweden, after passing thirty-two years of her middle life in unbroken sleep. There was the Berliner, who during the recent elections was engaged on a six-day cycle race; determined to fulfil his citizen's duty, he arranged for an official to pass him a voting paper,

spiked on the end of an umbrella, as he rode by; this he took, filled in, and dropped into a ballot box, held out for this purpose, on his next lap round.

For a happy moment we thought the prize in this section was going to be won by an employee of British Railways. A train was scheduled at short notice to leave a country station ten minutes early the following Monday; a signalman had observed a man always catch this train every Monday morning; when the signalman came off work on the Saturday he inquired the man's address and bicycled four miles to warn him of the changed schedule, thus turning the whole incident to the credit of his employers. But in the end British Railways had to yield pride of place to the United States Marines; a Marine corporal in Korea was cut off, and on reaching the coast saw friendly ships nearly a mile off shore; although he had never previously swum a stroke, he plunged in and swam one thousand fifteen hundred yards to safety. It's worth trying anything.

1951 may have some surprises in store for us; but, short of a photograph of the Loch Ness monster streaking past in a flying saucer, that corporal of Marines is going to take a lot of beating. H.H.



HOUSE AGENTS



Well, there's one very good thing—

House Agents



about failing to—

HOUSE AGENTS



find a flat;



it saves you—



all the—



trouble—



of failing—



to find—



a garage—



anywhere—



near—



it.

BOOKING OFFICE

The Theatre Shelf



IN *Chekhov* Mr. Ronald Hingley gives us both a very readable account of a life tragically cut short and intelligent appreciation of the mass of work crammed into it. This is a fair and helpful book, except that it treats with undeserved deference the Soviet critics busy finding below the surface of Chekhov's detachment an active hatred of the Tsarist regime. If Lewis Carroll had written in Russia the same contortionists would by now have canonized him as the arch-enemy of monarchy; and although Mr. Hingley admits that often, where they discover in the early works bitter satire on Russian illiteracy, Chekhov was concerned only to be funny, he might at least have put an exclamation mark after the following gem: "Soviet critics do, however, claim that if Chekhov had thought out the logical implications of his position he would inevitably have become a supporter of revolution." As if it matters, anyway, beside his triumph as an artist. In fact, though a man of the keenest sympathy—taking very seriously his call as a doctor and choosing for a holiday a penal settlement in Siberia—he seems to have been blessedly exempt from the zeals in which Tolstoy latterly dissipated his genius. "I believe in individual people," he said, and Gorky wrote to him "I think that you are the first man I have met who is free and bows down before nothing." When we add his passion for the truth, and his deep distrust of politics, we can reasonably doubt whether he would have found Soviet Russia a happy place. But in spite of this Mr. Hingley's book is not contentious, and it includes, usefully, a record of all the translated stories, listed for the first time in chronological order. The more one reads about Chekhov the more delightful he appears to have been, and certainly nothing would have pleased him better than the final irony that dispatched his body to Petersburg from the Black Forest in a railway wagon labelled "Fresh Oysters."

Mr. Ronald Watkins, who has successfully produced Shakespeare in Elizabethan conditions at Harrow School, pleads persuasively in *On Producing Shakespeare* for a reconstruction of the Globe. American research has lately provided new data, and Mr. Watkins urges that since 1642 the plays have never been performed on the lines for which they were written. Economics are outside his argument, but in relation to the mushroom fancies now sprouting on the South Bank the cost would be negligible. And for Shakespeare the Globe's overwhelming advantages over the modern picture stage are beyond question. As this book demonstrates, with patient and convincing scholarship, the Globe was not merely very well equipped but equipped exactly to suit Shakespeare's requirements, for these were cut to its measure. That a full apron stage would offer the actor an intimate position in the very centre of the octagon is only one of the benefits, of which the flexibility of the town-house multiple set and the opportunities for grouping in depth are others

equally important. Mr. Watkins, who brings much fresh light to his subject, takes us through a possible production of "Macbeth" and describes how, in a new Globe, a company could be built up (boys would come back) to recapture the glories of the Chamberlain's Men in speech and mime and also in an understanding of Shakespeare we have lost. What a grand and exciting experiment it would be!

Those who have wondered how Coco, the Bertram Mills clown, survives his daily drenchings will be interested to hear that he caught a cold fifteen years ago and has had it ever since. He divides his work into dry-comedy and water-comedy, and for the latter gets through twenty-six buckets at each performance. *Behind My Greasepaint* is a further slice of his reminiscences, and highly entertaining they are, written with an artless courtesy which is endearing. For instance, "I should very much like to mention horses and dogs. They are both very peculiar animals." Coco demolishes the notion that the circus is anything but gruelling, but for him and his fellows it is life.

Ring Up the Curtain, Mr. H. F. Maltby's memoirs as dramatist and actor, is a very loosely strung chain of anecdotes, some of which are good. The style is facetious, so that a dentist becomes a "drill-manipulator," but there is lasting enthusiasm for the theatre.

ERIC KROWN

Martyrs Have Their Uses

Great insight, more than a hint of vision, incisive characterization and a drama that is Gothic in its distorted detail and classical in its calm design, render *The Forests of the Night* an unforgettable novel. With it M. Jean-Louis Curtis won the Prix Goncourt. (His translator, rather distressingly, uses American for the argot of his underworld.) The scene alternates between a small Pyrenean town and Paris. Both are part of



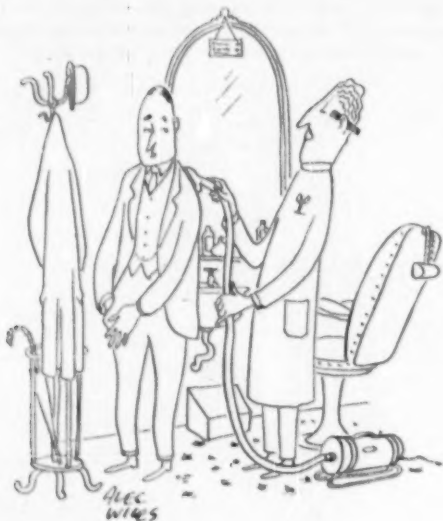
the jungle that is occupied France, a tiger's jungle, a cover for slinking appetites. In Saint-Clar, Francis de Balanun, a schoolboy whose Pétainist father keeps a Roman *virtus* absurdly and lovably alive, plays Roland to every *résistance* Oliver who can be smuggled over the frontier. In Paris, his sister Hélène succumbs to two of the Béarnais "tigers." Her complicity in the spiritual downfall of France is handled, however, with less assurance than her brother's heroism, which, exploited though it is by the scum of the "Liberation," retains its untarnishable lustre.

H. F. E.

Background to Stalin's Russia

At Minsk nine men met in March, 1898, and founded the Russian Social-Democratic Workers' Party in whose name a manifesto summoned the Russian working-class to establish "a social order in which there will be no place for the exploitation of man by man" (a summons that must to-day ring mockingly in the ears of the millions incarcerated in forced labour and correction camps). Out of such beginnings arose the disciplined Communist Party that two decades later in *The Bolshevik Revolution, 1917-1923*, of which Professor E. H. Carr in this first volume of a history of Soviet Russia gives an outstandingly impartial analytical account, set up its own ruthless dictatorship over the masses under the supreme direction first of Lenin and then of Stalin. Always mindful that Russia cannot be judged by Western European standards Professor Carr clearly explains the historic background to "the political, social and economic order" that challenges the free world. A book indispensable for an understanding of Stalin and Stalin's Russia.

I. F. D. M.



The Cut-glass Menagerie

In *The Roman Spring of Mrs. Stone* Mr. Tennessee Williams has tried his hand at the *nouvelle*, that dangerous form which tends to be either an inflated short story or a novel so compressed that all the juice is squeezed out. This study of an ageing actress, who drifts through an intrigue with a gigolo in Rome, and, failing to arouse his personal interest, plunges deliberately into unromantic sexuality, has a tremendous air, though it lacks subtlety and edge. In ten pages it might be effective; in a hundred-and-twenty-six it seems over-written and thin. The blurb quotes reviews comparing it to James. It may be a Jamesian situation but it lacks the Jamesian fertility of investigation. The chic indecencies, which will shock some readers without enlivening others, are evidences of failure to meet the obligations of what seems to be a frank bid for stardom. The immortal does not need pepping up.

R. G. G. P.

The Hiss Trials

Mr. Alistair Cooke's *A Generation on Trial* is much more than a reworking of his celebrated dispatches to the *Manchester Guardian* about the two trials of Alger Hiss. It does give a full account of the trials—a brilliant piece of extended reporting, humane, civilized, ironical, objective; but it also reminds us that this narrative deals with "the trials of a man who was judged in one decade for what he was said to have done in another," summarizing in a long introductory section the changes in popular feeling about Communism over the last fifteen years. The author hopes his book will disappoint people looking for "ammunition for a side already chosen"; he has done his admirable best to provide a record to which the "puzzled and fair-minded" may turn in order to reach their own conclusions about the proper verdict. Seldom can an essentially serious book have been made more absorbing for the general reader.

R. M.

Books Reviewed Above

- Checkov*, Ronald Hingley. (Allen and Unwin, 21/-)
On Producing Shakespeare, Ronald Watkins. (Michael Joseph, 21/-)
Behind My Greasepaint, Coco the Clown. (Hutchinson, 10/6)
Ring Up the Curtain, H. F. Maltby. (Hutchinson, 21/-)
The Forests of the Night, Jean-Louis Curtis. Translated from the French by Nora Wydenbruck. (John Lehmann, 12/6)
The Bolshevik Revolution, 1917-1923, E. H. Carr. (Macmillan, 25/-)
The Roman Spring of Mrs. Stone, Tennessee Williams. (John Lehmann, 7/6)
A Generation on Trial: U.S.A. v. Alger Hiss, Alistair Cooke. (Hart-Davis, 12/6)

Other Recommended Books

- Hamlet and the Pirates*, D. S. Savage. (Eyre and Spottiswoode, 9/-) Absorbing literary detection tending to prove that the pirate episode was added in a later revision and refers to the literary piracy of the "Bad" Quarto. Convincing, amusing and readable.
Shooting an Elephant, George Orwell. (Secker and Warburg, 10/-) Posthumous collection of essays not previously printed in book form: three reminiscent narrative, six lively literary and political criticism, and a final group of shorter, less considered pieces from the author's weekly column in *Tribune*; diversely stimulating.

THINGS TO COME

WHENEVER a bus conductor gives me my ticket by pressing a button and turning a handle, instead of wrenching the ticket from a great clumsy wedge of other tickets, jamming it in a little gadget with a slot, and pressing a lever that rings a bell and makes a hole in the ticket, I think of Arthur. For it was Arthur who thought of the thing with the handle.

"Some day," he said to me once (I forget how long ago), "they'll have tickets in a long roll inside a thing, and all they'll have to do is just turn a handle and one'll come out of a slot so they can tear it off."

Arthur thought of lots of things like that. I remember once he tapped one of those litter baskets fastened to a lamp-post, and said "Some day they'll have litter receptacles without any holes for bits of paper and orange peel and that to fall out through." And years later, when we saw the first one, he smiled knowingly at me.

Even at a very early age his foresight was remarkable. He foresaw an inkwell so contrived that it wouldn't spill when you knocked it over. And when the market became flooded with them he merely shrugged. On another occasion he staggered me by suggesting that the time would come when we would

have oranges without any pips; and on the very same day he said (quite casually, as I remember) "We won't always have to fiddle about with cat's-whiskers, you know. They'll be done away with altogether, and you'll just have to turn a knob thing."

How pleased I was that he lived to see all these wonders come to pass! He never boasted. He never claimed any credit. As his dream-children came to life one by one he permitted himself no more than a satisfied nod, a gracious smile of approval.

In the world of show business he was particularly fertile. Years before foreseeing the talkies he astounded his parents with a hissing prophecy of seats that would fold back when you stood up, so that latecomers could only kick your shins with difficulty. And when the electric organ added its melodious tremors to the din of the cinema he was quick to grasp its ultimate possibilities. "Soon," he shouted in my ear one afternoon as we watched an organist playing "Old Man River" with his feet, "these organs will come up through the floor on a sort of a lift thing and they'll shine different coloured lights on them."

"Why?" I said.

Arthur merely shrugged. He seldom theorized, and he avoided details. With him the idea was all. He thought of things.

The last two of his visions to become hard fact were magazines small enough to slip into your pocket and get tobacco and bits of old toffee stuck to the pages, and table-lamps made out of Chianti bottles.

In a way, I suppose, Arthur was a barometer of civilization.

Shortly before his death he confided to me three ideas which so far have not been realized. The first concerned stories in the magazines that slip into your pocket. "One day," said Arthur, "they won't go trailing off among the adverts as though the editor had got ashamed of them. They'll finish out in the open." The second was a new kind of film, especially devised for continuous performances, with no beginning, no end, and no flash-backs. The third was an enormous bomb, powered by some kind of a rocket-thing, which will explode in the air over cities, and scatter aspirin tablets, American comics, and carnival hats inscribed "Chase Me!" over a wide area.

I await these significant developments with confidence. Arthur never let me down before.



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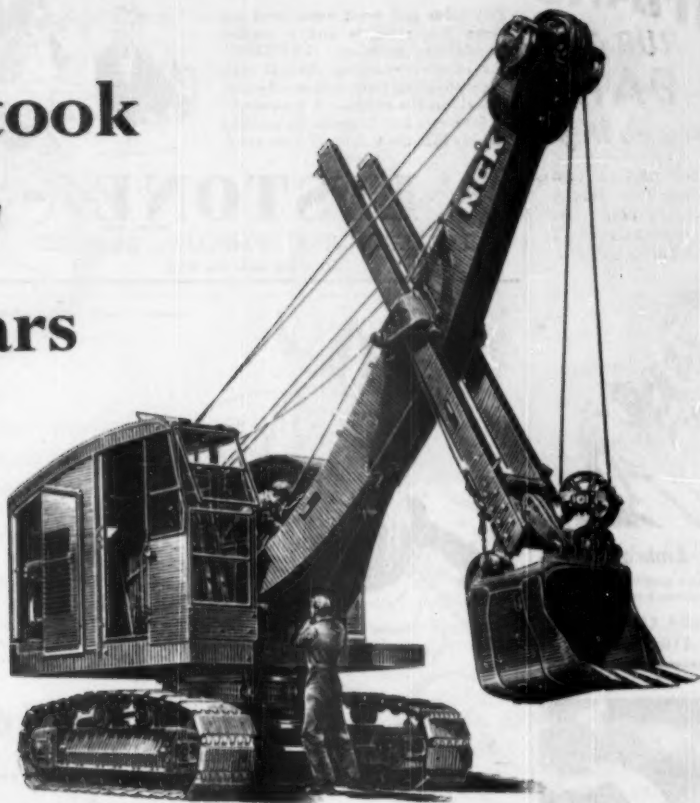
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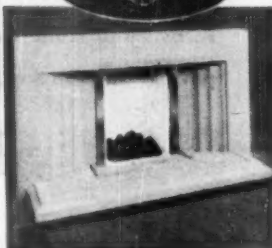
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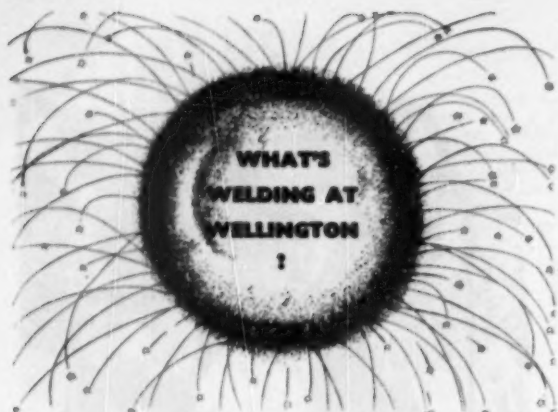


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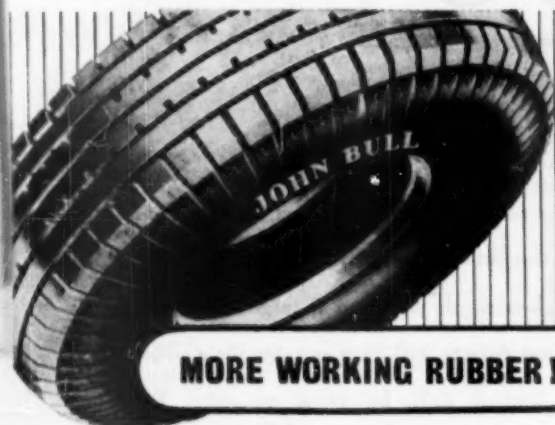
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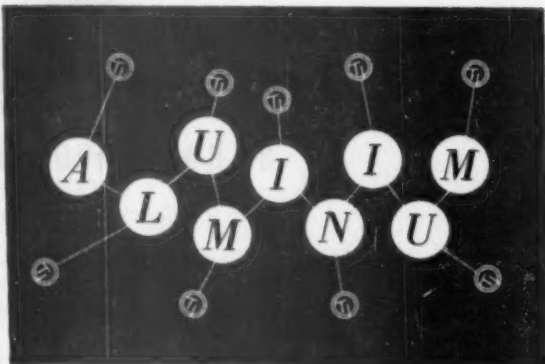
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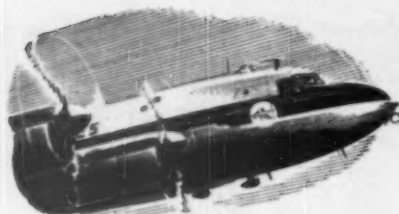
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That is one obvious reason why even the increased power now available is not yet enough to meet the maximum simultaneous demands of consumers at the "rush" or "Peak Demand" Hours. And why "Power Cuts" unfortunately cannot be ended — unless you help!

THE PEAK PROBLEM

Electricity cannot be stored on a large scale. Enough generating plant must therefore be provided to meet the maximum simultaneous demands of consumers.

Unfortunately there is not at present always enough generating plant available to supply consumers' "Peak Demands". And when demand

exceeds supply, some load must be shed; that is what causes "Power Cuts".

At times when there is not a "Peak Load" greater than can be met, and always at night-time and during week-ends, there is some generating plant idle, waiting to supply your need.

THE SOLUTION

By using your electric appliances, particularly electric fires, as little as possible during times of "Peak Demand", and when you hear a B.B.C. warning, you can limit or eliminate "Power Cuts". At other "Off-Peak" times "Electricity is at Your Service". Use your Electricity "Off-Peak".

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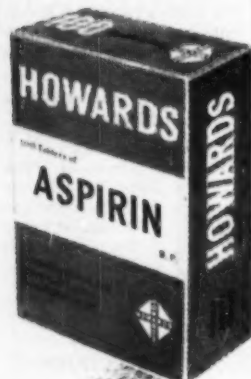
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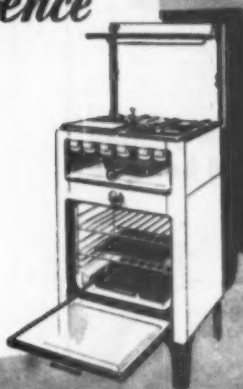
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